

**An Evaluation of the Social
Action Process as a Mechanism
for the Transfer of Knowledge to
Facilitate the Development of
New Children's Services in
Ukraine**

**Joanne Aubrey
PhD
De Montfort University**

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Abstract

This research explores the use of social action to transfer knowledge in a cross-cultural context, through an evaluation of a programme of training for professionals involved in deinstitutionalising state child care and introducing community-based fostering and adoption services.

It begins by placing the research in historical context, through an examination of the roots of development and the history of child care in Russia and the Former Soviet Union. It goes on to offer a critique of Western consultancy to the region and the models that have been used in the development of new social services.

Power has proved to be an integral theme in the consultancy process and, as such, the literature review offers an analysis of power as it relates to the situation in the post-communist region. The literature review concludes with an in-depth examination of social action, its philosophical roots and the specific methods and models used by the Centre for Social Action.

The research uses a critical social research approach in order to address some of the inequalities inherent within the consultancy process and also includes elements of feminist research and ethnography. Qualitative methods were used including individual and group interviews and field notes and observations.

The research finds that the situation of the training room reflects global power structures and that an understanding of these structures is crucial to the success of consultancy in the region. Consultants need to have knowledge of the cultural, social and economic history of the region and how global power structures are drawing the post-communist region into its fold through coercive economic controls and consensual control through popular culture and consumerism. The impact of the wider situation affects the behaviour of participants, who are feeling the effects of their loss of global power and are struggling to reclaim their national culture, while at the same time attempting to come to terms with all of the new Western influences with which they have been deluged.

The research also finds that no matter how intent consultants are not to impose their professional beliefs and values into the process, it is incredibly difficult to achieve this when deep-seated values are challenged. The research reveals that an understanding of the complexity of the specific situation in Ukraine, and a commitment not to be judgmental is vital if cross-cultural programmes of knowledge transfer are to be successful.

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Glossary of Terms

CSA –	Centre for Social Action
CEE –	Central and Eastern Europe
CIS -	Commonwealth of Independent States
FSU -	Former Soviet Union
IMF –	International Monetary Fund
NGO-	Non-Government Organisation
PAR –	Participatory Action Research
UN –	United Nations
UNICEF –	United Nations Children's Fund
US/USA –	United States of America
UISR –	Ukrainian Institute of Social Research
USSR –	United Soviet Socialist Republic
West/Western	These terms refer to the collective groups of countries termed the 'developed world' they include the majority of Europe, excluding the post-communist countries, the United States of America and Canada and Australasia. West and Western have been capitalised because they do not represent a geographical location but a political and predominant values system, i.e. Capitalism.

A Note on Language

Before the events of 1989, Ukraine was part of the Soviet Union a collective of countries and states brought together in 1917 after the October Revolution. Often, the literature refers to the USSR as Russia, where now, Russia is an independent state, as are the other countries that once used to form the Soviet Union.

Ukraine was a part of the Soviet Union, and as such conformed to Soviet rule. Russian was also its official language for almost a century. This has created some confusion when writing this thesis. For example Hingley's 1972 book 'The Russian Mind' is about the Soviet mind and much of the literature concerning both Soviet and post-communist studies often use the word Russia to embrace the entire USSR. To add to the confusion, at the beginning of the training courses, Russian was used in the sessions, towards the end of the courses, Ukrainian was used as the country was beginning to reclaim its cultural identity after having communism imposed. The reader should note that when the literature refers to Russia in publications written pre-1989, this does not refer exclusively to the new state of Russia, but rather to the Soviet Union as a whole.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

The events of 1989 saw the end of the communist experiment in Eastern Europe. Shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall in the former East Germany, the other countries of the old Eastern Bloc rejected the political ideology that had been central to their lives for as long as three quarters of a century. Whether through peaceful demonstration or with violence, in a matter of a few months old political infrastructures collapsed and an entirely opposite system embraced.

What occurred in Eastern Europe was not as a result of a spontaneous uprising, rather it happened as a result of several significant changes that stemmed mainly from the USSR, (although the Solidarity movement in Poland and civil uprisings in Hungary Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan over a period of decades are also said to have contributed to the crumbling of the Eastern Bloc). These events saw the beginnings of social movements and a civil society that proved difficult to suppress (Hall et al 1992).

The financial pressures of the arms race, had been building since the early 1980s. Ever more intricate weapons systems had caused economic decline in the US, but the crumbling infrastructure of the Soviet Union could not cope (Hall et al 1992). The election of Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985 led to an overhaul of Russian politics and the introduction of schemes that were introduced in an attempt to boost a floundering economy.

Beginning with a clamp down on corruption, the changes affected by Gorbachev began to encompass publicity and the drive to expose corrupt officials. By 1986, the whole political and economic system was experiencing an overhaul. Hoskings (1990) also maintains that the Chernobyl disaster in Ukraine was responsible to some extent for the political realisation,

“Of the mortally dangerous effects of a centrally administered economy which handled awesome technological power with such secretive and slovenly irresponsibility.”

The Soviet Union had always been a very powerful presence within the Eastern Bloc and before long, the momentum for change had embraced most of the communist systems in Eastern Europe. As the old USSR began

to adopt free market economics, other countries in the region followed suit. For many states in the region, the Soviet Union was the country on which they depended most for trade and as such, they could not be left behind.

Alongside the political and economic changes, there came colossal changes in social life for the populations of the post-communist countries. After years of being guaranteed employment, the end of government subsidy to industry found many unemployed and having to rely upon a barely adequate social security system, tightly controlled by the International Monetary Fund (Deacon 1992).

For years people had been told that the West was the evil imperialistic empire whose motivation was greed and the destruction of socialism. After 1989 the populace of Eastern Europe were now told to embrace all that was Western. Socialism and everything associated with it became anathema and politicians admitted to their people that the going would be tough but the benefits worth waiting for. Western products appeared in newly open, privately run shops. Television networks were crammed with American soap operas and pop stars, and newspapers and magazines became available that extolled the virtues of all of the above.

The term 'transition' surfaced to describe the changes occurring on every level. Civil Society had to be formed quickly and democracy installed. Newly converted ex-communist politicians found themselves liaising with international agencies that wanted to advise them on everything from pension reform to environmental laws. In order that the appropriate people could learn the mechanisms and nuances of capitalism, there were no shortages of consultants and advisors that were willing to impart their knowledge for a large fee, over several all-expenses-paid visits. These experts were mainly recruited from the business field, in order that the economy could be ready to trade with the Western multinationals who were standing by to begin exploiting such a tempting new market and cheap labour force.

As well as the restructuring of their economies, Eastern European countries were exposed for many of their inadequate social care systems. The Romanian orphanage scandal was flashed across the world with images of cold, damp buildings and babies receiving little food and even less

stimulation. Aid lorries were mobilised and thanks to the publicity, quickly filled and sent East. Eastern Europe was soon labelled the 'second world' in need of development and serious Western assistance. International non-government organisations were keen to assist in the restructuring of social welfare services, particularly those for vulnerable children living in the large residential homes across the region. The social development consultants soon began arriving to assist with reform.

Personal Interest

The research is rooted in the researcher's experience of development in the region and a personal desire to examine the phenomenon of aid to Eastern Europe. The researcher became involved with a Romanian community project in 1991 and was subsequently asked to work for one year developing a nursery initiative with a local project affiliated to an international charity.

Over a period of several years of involvement in Romania, it became clear that much of the aid that was sent caused many more problems than it actually solved. Romanian project managers in the area criticised what they felt was the misguided compassion of Western charities and the fact that they did not see the wider picture. The local orphanage for babies and small children provides an excellent example of this. At the end of 1989, there were approximately seventy young babies being cared for at the home, by the end of 1995 there were one hundred and twenty. Local organisations felt that this could be due to several factors including the increase of local poverty and unemployment. Most believed that it was due to the improved conditions in the home, making it easier for parents to place their children in care believing that they would have a better start in the comparatively luxurious surroundings that they could not hope to emulate.

Another such problem became apparent with the older children in state care. Inflation rates rocketed during the 1990s and as such commodities such as clothes became extremely expensive. Whilst families were struggling to provide clothes for their children, their counterparts in state care were receiving lorry loads of clothes and toiletries on a monthly basis. This created ill-feeling and even the Directors of local children's homes confided to the researcher of their concerns for the situation. After receiving clothes

on demand, young people when leaving care would find the transition to 'normal' life very difficult indeed. They also recognised that within the town, children in care were labelled as 'deviant' by the local community, more bad feeling due to the aid received could only be damaging to both the young people and the reputation of the children's homes. The Romanians known to the researcher felt that the West had a very limited idea of the kind of aid that would be of most use. Many social development workers complained that social problems in their country could not be addressed simply by a deluge of material goods sent from the West.

This experience of aid and development in Romania was the main motivation for this research, although there are other related areas of interest. Through spending much time in a post-communist country there were many issues that were of interest. Romanian people had been brutalised for 30 years by Nicolae Ceausescu and his Securitate (secret police). The researcher discussed many issues with Romanian colleagues and friends and became fascinated by their experiences during the long Ceausescu era. There were many questions that came to mind, not least the extent to which people were affected emotionally and psychologically by such extremism.

Although a separate country with an altogether different history, Ukraine has experienced some of the difficulties faced by Romania. The change from planned to market economics brings with it similar problems and the dilemmas of aid are similar.

There is sparse literature available concerning the role of aid to Eastern Europe and specifically the nature of the social development context. There have been some tentative comparisons made with the development situation within the Third World (Kennan and Stephens 1992) but these have been mainly concerned with the extent to which lessons can be learned, rather than with the specific situation in Eastern Europe itself. The researcher wanted to undertake an in-depth examination of the nature of aid and consultancy in Eastern Europe, using a single case study and exploring both the process of consultancy and knowledge generation, and the extent to which a communist history, culture and society impacted upon this process.

Since the early 1990s the Centre for Social Action (CSA) based at De Montfort University, has been involved in social development contracts in the Former Soviet Union and Ukraine. Based upon a successful collaboration with the Ukrainian Institute for Social Research (UISR), the CSA was awarded a UNICEF contract for a pilot project to de-institutionalise child care and to introduce a system of fostering and adoption in two cities: Kyiv and Odesa.

The project involved British social work consultants undertaking the training of child care professionals in Ukraine over a period of three years. The process of this exchange or transfer of knowledge is the focus of this research which sets out to explore many different issues including the nature of knowledge transfer, the power dynamics of consultancy and aid-giving, and the extent to which it is possible to create meaningful change in a country that has been used to a very different system for such a long period of time.

There are peripheral issues that are also important to the research. The phenomenon of the end of socialism and the speed at which people are being asked to change is unprecedented. People used to living within a communist society are being asked to discard old habits and customs and to equip themselves with the means to survive within the very different set of laws that a capitalist society demands. The type of communism that existed in Eastern Europe did its best to erase individual responsibility.

The collective was so much more important than the individual. Drakulic (1996:35) explains,

"Since everything was collectively owned, no one was really responsible: no one was in charge, no one cared. Every individual was absolved of responsibility because he or she delegated it to a higher level, that of an institution."

Capitalism is rooted in individual responsibility, and Eastern Europeans are now being asked to change their psyche from the mind set of the collective to the individualistic. The demands to change this mentality must surely impact in some way on the receipt and sharing of knowledge

On an international level, Eastern Europeans have a certain reputation. People travelling with a passport from Russia, Croatia or Romania, are almost guaranteed to be stopped by immigration and customs officials. They are the poor relations who are interrogated as to the amount of money they are carrying and the length of their stay. Even when they have shown the appropriate documents there still remains the suspicion that they will cross the border into the West and once they experience life there – will obviously want to stay (Drakulic 1996). There are certainly questions here concerning global attitudes towards post-communist countries and the extent to which they impact upon the consultancy they receive

All of the above issues will have a bearing on the research, as well as exploring the individual nature of the transfer of knowledge, the research seeks to examine the wider issues that will influence change in whatever form.

Research Outline

The research will begin with an examination of the history of development, in order to place the situation in Eastern Europe in context. Following on from that the literature review will continue to place the research within its historical context with a history of child care in the Former Soviet Union. This chapter will conclude with an examination the present child care situation which has attracted so much attention in terms of social development consultancy. After this the concept of consultancy to the region will be considered and then an examination of the literature related specifically to social work related consultancies that have been undertaken in the region.

Both the literature and the research findings reveal that there are many power dynamics at work within a development context, and in the light of this the literature review will continues with an examination of some of general concepts and philosophies of power and how these relate to the situation in central and eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union.

The final chapter of the literature will examine social action which is the model that was used within the consultancies evaluated as part of this research. It is a method that aims to place the power of content with the

participants themselves, it claims not to impose an agenda and believes that people acting collectively can create change.

Methodology

The research uses critical social theory in order to highlight some of these power issues and seeks to challenge some of the taken for granted notions of aid-giving and also seeks to shed light upon issues that have been largely neglected. In terms of social theory and research approaches, this research has not selected one specific strategy.

Whilst the basic paradigm that has dictated the research, has been that of critical social research the researcher maintains that there are many approaches to research that can be used in order that the findings may be as far reaching as possible. One methodology was not selected, rather the researcher wanted to use a range of qualitative approaches in order that people would have the freedom to discuss and to explore their own experiences of the consultancy process.

Qualitative methods have been used throughout including group interviews, individual semi-structured interviews, field notes and observations. Through the above methods and strategies the research seeks to ask the following questions:

- How is knowledge transferred from UK social work professionals to their Ukrainian colleagues?
- To what extent do history and culture have an impact upon the knowledge transferred?
- How do the principles of social action work within a different cultural context?
- How do the partner organisations interact and work together, how do their aims converge?
- How do language, interpretation and translation affect the process of knowledge generation?
- What are the wider global issues that effect the process of knowledge transfer and development in Eastern Europe

An Overview of the Training in Ukraine

Funded by UNICEF and the Department for International Development, and delivered by the Centre for Social Action at De Montfort University, the Deinstitutionalisation of Child Care project was split into four separate areas which were as follows:

- Work with residential children's homes to encourage the development of models of work that best meet the child's interests and foster their abilities to live independently once they are adults
- Work to develop a system of foster care in Ukraine
- Develop models of support for families in crisis appropriate to Ukraine
- Develop community-based social support for disabled children and their families

The projects also contained a research aspect in order that a clear picture could be obtained of the situation of children living away from their families. Three series of training sessions were delivered for each of the four separate elements. Participants on the course were multi-disciplinary and included social workers, Directors and workers in Children's Homes and, representatives from the newly emerging voluntary sector. The programme was managed by a senior researcher from the Ukrainian Institute for Social Research.

The British team of trainers was also multidisciplinary and included youth and social workers, those with experience of social action training, people who also had experience of foster care in the UK as children or carers. (Fleming 2000:69)

The process began with training sessions in Ukraine over a period of two years. Once people had begun to initiate changes within their work places and in terms of social policy and legislation, participants were invited to England to visit projects for children and young people. Joint seminars took place at De Montfort University where participants from the UISR gave workshops about their experiences of social action and the changes that had occurred. Participants who were practitioners attended International Fostering Conferences and gave presentations to delegates about their

experiences of introducing community-based fostering and adoption services. There were many people representing countries from central and eastern Europe and participants enjoyed sharing elements of good practice and learning from each other's experiences.

The researcher has chosen specifically to examine only the training course element of the programmes. The research has been time-limited and to have evaluated the entire programme would not have been feasible. The training courses themselves have allowed the researcher to examine the process of Social action in its purest sense.

Chapter 2 - A History of Development

Development studies is a Western academic discipline deeply rooted in a colonialist past. The first development workers were the missionaries who followed imperial armies and sought to convert the 'natives'. Conversion was not purely spiritual, it also meant to clothe, to educate and in short to 'civilise' the indigenous population. Development and its study are traditionally associated with the countries of the 'south': Africa, South America and Asia. When Communism ended in the late 1980s, it became apparent that the countries of central and eastern Europe, were in need of assistance. The term 'Second World' was created for the region, for whilst it needed development assistance, poverty in the 'Third World' was worse. Killick and Stevens(1992) argue that there are important lessons for eastern Europe to learn from development experience in the Third World, therefore it seems appropriate to begin with a history of development, an examination of the methods that have been used, the flaws they may have had, and the extent to which they have been successful in their aims.

The very word under-development suggests that donor countries are in some way superior to recipient states. The imperial forces that colonised various parts of the world during the latter part of the 19th century saw themselves as fully developed. To this day the term is still used to suggest that through technology, refined economic systems and trade patterns, some countries are more developed and 'civilised' than others.

As the early Christian missionaries attempted to 'civilise' through the propagation of their faith, so the new imperialists would seem to be attempting a similar conversion. Indigenous people are no longer being offered an alternative religion, rather they are being presented with policies of structural adjustment, free-market economics and technological advancement. However, Hall (1992) notes that monetary obsession, is not simply a 20th century phenomenon. He maintains that the first European colonialists were governed by their understandings of norms which were concerned with their systems of monetary exchange, trade and commerce. He states:

"Europeans assumed that since the natives did not have such an economic system, they therefore had no system at all and offered gifts to visitors whose natural superiority they instantly recognised."
(Hall 1992: 305)

Europeans could not comprehend that social systems other than their own existed and that these were often more complex and based upon reciprocity rather than trade.

This misunderstanding has continued to the present day, in that Western 'developed' society is acceptable and all other societies are 'Other.' Hall (1992) terms this self-awarded superiority the 'West and the Rest' discourse which began with the period of Enlightenment in Europe during the late 17th and 18th centuries.

Enlightenment was the point in history at which philosophers began to examine society and the features that comprised it. Theories of human nature were introduced, and the formation of social life in terms of law, politics and society as a developing organism. Philosophers of the time began to observe different societies in terms of the phases that they went through in order to become fully 'developed'. The lowest phase of development, they argued, could be found in the 'new' American continent, the highest was the zenith of development and civil society represented by the West. In short, Western European society was used as a measure for all others.

Hall (1992: 314) argues that the Rest (ie all other non-Western cultures) was essential to the growth of enlightenment and without it,

"The West would not have been able to recognise and represent itself as the summit of human history ... The other was the dark side, - forgotten, repressed, and denied; the reverse image of enlightenment and modernity."

Even within the academic disciplines of social science, Hettne (1995) points out that the study of society is termed sociology, the study of the 'other' is called social anthropology, a word which almost seems to suggest the study of another species altogether.

With its practical and academic foundations within colonialism and the enlightenment era respectively, it was only after World War II that development studies became fully recognised as an academic discipline. To understand international development as it exists today, it is first necessary to explore the ways in which it has evolved over the past fifty years; the political trends that have shaped it and the policies that have determined its present condition.

The Post War Era

The academic field of development studies appeared just after the second World War and was dominated by macroeconomic theories and problems that were concerned with global inequalities between rich and poor countries. (Brohman 1996).

The Marshall Plan, and Europe's speedy recovery, gave credence to the idea that planned intervention, if properly and scientifically managed, could stimulate rapid development. However, the impetus to provide aid for the Third World was not merely an economic experiment or a philanthropic gesture. At the beginning of the cold war, both the USA and the USSR were competing for influence in the south and the frameworks of development during the 1940s and 50s reflect this (Brohman 1996).

The USA offered capitalist growth and industrialisation, whilst the USSR promised socialist development. Preston (1986: xv) goes so far as to state that development theory in its political sense is the original "*ideological child of Communist containment*." Brohman (1996: 10) provides an example of this in the form of the 1947 Truman Doctrine, which stated that, "*Any political or economic change not sanctioned by the US would be arrested*." The fact that the United States was dominant in the new development economics field comes as no surprise when one examines the nature of the first interventions into 'Third World' economics.

Growth Theory

The neo-classicist approach that gained significance after the Second World War, advised that the problems of developing countries could be solved through,

"A process of capital formation which is determined by levels of savings and investment. Domestic savings should be directed towards productive investment especially in high growth sectors such as manufacturing industries." (Brohman 1996:12)

During the first stages of growth, the state would be asked to make extensive interventions, but then it was assumed that growth would be essentially market driven. The situation in developing countries was only ever seen in terms of economics and the social and cultural implications were largely ignored, except in terms of how these areas would facilitate the social changes that would accompany growth (Brohman 1996).

Lewis (1950:36) uses the snowball image to illustrate how growth theory is supposed to work:

"Once the snowball starts to move downhill, it will move of its own momentum, and it will get bigger and bigger as it goes along ... You have as it were to begin rolling your snowball up the mountain. Once you get it there, the rest is easy, but you cannot get it there without first making the initial effort."

It was believed that once growth had occurred, and a country had developed economically, there would be a trickle down effect to the poorest within a given society, and that poverty and inequality would be eased.

Within the works of many growth theorists there are obvious racist colonial overtones, used to justify this particular system of development. Malthus (1952) considers the situation of India and notes the, "*Indolence, ignorance and improvidence of the Indians*" (quoted in Larrain 1989; 26). He uses an unusual argument stating that as the Indian soil is fertile, the people have too much leisure time and that in order to break this cycle new needs should be stimulated through international trade. He continues:

"an almost necessary ingredient in the progress of wealth is its tendency to inspire new wants, to form new tastes, and to furnish fresh motives for industry." (1952 cited in Larrain 1989; 26))

However, by the 1960s many development experts came to the realisation that growth theory was unrealistic. A World Bank official on consideration of the post war era of growth theory style development categorically stated that:

"In country after country, economic growth is being accompanied by rising disparities ... the masses are complaining that development has not touched their ordinary lives. Very often, economic growth has meant very little social justice. It has been accompanied by rising unemployment, worsening social services and an increasing absolute and relative poverty." (Quoted in Brohman 1996:203)

During the first United Nations Development Decade (1961 - 1971) it was generally agreed that the emphasis in development had been placed too heavily on macro-economics and that a new era of aid, heralded by the two decades of development, should concentrate on the universal provision of basic needs and should be firmly rooted at community level. (Brohman 1996)

The 1970s saw the emergence of new styles of development that were particularly focused upon poverty alleviation, and basic needs provision. The emphasis was also on the redistribution of incomes and resources. The realisation had dawned that economic stimulation and growth were simply not sufficient and that the poorest of the poor countries were not experiencing any of the trickle down effect that was originally expected.

Although the 1970s saw the arrival of alternative development strategies, Moser (1989) traces the foundations of alternative development to British colonialists who used it in order to provide education and social welfare in some areas. It could be argued however that the comparison cannot realistically be made and that Colonial efforts to create community approaches could never be bottom up, simply because the power was not with the indigenous population. The education and social welfare was provided by Westerners, whose interpretation of need was very different to that of the native populace. Jalee (1968: 9) states that this particular type of development was, and has always been, undeniably one-sided. He argues that

"Imperialism has shaped the production of the third world for the satisfaction of its own needs and without regard for the needs of its inhabitants."

The rejection of macro economic solutions for developing countries saw several strategies for development begin to emerge. These were concerned either with employment-intensive initiatives aimed at the working poor, or the basic needs approach which was concerned both with human needs, (clothes, food etc.) and more culturally specific needs such as quality of life, identity and freedom.

The initiatives of the 1970s have evolved into the practices that represent development today. The major international NGOs and the United Nations remain committed to an approach that is grounded within local communities and which seeks to empower local people to build upon the capacities they have to achieve sustainable growth.

This research is concerned with the so-called 'bottom up' approach and seeks to examine the effectiveness of training local people to create a system of fostering and adoption and to transform residential child care in Ukraine. This section will begin by examining some of the approaches that have been used previously and how they have attempted to ground themselves within communities.

Alternative Approaches to Development

During the 1970s accepted theories within the field of development studies were challenged, the most fundamental of which was the conclusion that development research should be undertaken with the people and for the people. It was within this new environment that the method of Participatory Action Research (PAR) was tested and developed.

Lewin describes the whole PAR process as,

"a spiral of steps each of which is composed of planning, acting, observing, and evaluating the result of the action." (Cited in McTaggart 1997: 27)

Freire was a powerful advocate of this approach and maintained that it was only through dialogue that real change could occur. He created a series of educational techniques that were,

“A process of learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality.” (Wuyts et al 1992: 136)

Rahman (1993) provides a useful overview of the methodology of PAR. In the first instance, people are brought together to discover collectively to explore why they are experiencing poverty, through social investigation and their own analysis. This stage of the process begins to develop the critical awareness of the community.

The next stage of the process involves the people forming their own groups and organisations and through these taking action against what they have decided oppresses them during the first stage of the process. In terms of outside involvement, expertise and material goods are relatively unimportant and are used only as a reinforcement of the groups' own resources and skills.

The group will eventually collect information and take action based upon the research into their own environment and will come together sporadically to review and reflect upon their experiences and to plan for future action.

The final stage of the process involves the group going further into the community in order to begin the same process with other underprivileged groups, a collective is formed and links are developed with other organisations in the area.

The key concepts of PAR encompass participation and empowerment. However there are several issues within them that deserve further examination, for although in a theoretical sense the method seems to be one which actively involves the community in decisions which affect its life, in practice there are pitfalls that prevent full participation and which can see certain parties begin to dominate.

Henkel and Stirrat (1997) argue that participatory approaches do not always lead to empowerment and the dominant power structures embedded within communities become reproduced because participatory policies tend to be politically naïve. They also maintain that development agencies merely use a participatory approach in order to implement their projects more effectively rather than seeking real participation. Henkel and Stirrat also

suggest that participatory approaches are seen to be morally superior and there is a sense in which the 'beneficiaries' are morally bound to participate.

PAR is said to concentrate upon minorities (Rahman 1995: Brohman 1996). However, Mikkelson (1995) argues that PAR does not reach all disadvantaged groups especially women, the landless, ethnic minorities and the poorest. She goes on to state that the literate, the rich, and landlords often begin to dominate and that the poor are left out. Local officials are also prone to be obstructive if they are improperly briefed concerning the objectives and principles of PAR.

There are other dilemmas within the PAR approach, not least the concern that the method can be imposed upon local communities by donors or organisations (Mikkelson 1995). The approach defines itself as a bottom up model, and yet if those communities accept the approach without the conviction that it is the most appropriate model, one could suggest that it is simply one more oppressive development technique that is essentially hierarchical and top-down. Freire (1972) maintains that for liberation to occur, a pedagogy must be forged with, not for, the oppressed, he states that:

"Only power that springs from the weakness of the oppressed will be sufficiently strong to free both." (1972: 21)

The PAR approach to development has often been linked to the ideology of historical materialism. However, Rahman (1993: 83) maintains that Marxist methodology places emphasis upon the means of production. He argues thus:

"Domination of masses by the elites is rooted not only in the polarisation of control over the means of production, but also of the means of knowledge production, including the social power to determine what is valid or useful knowledge."

It would seem then, that although PAR has the capacity to be a model of development that empowers those at grass roots level, it also has the potential to become a tool of the powerful to inflict a process and a method upon the community without either their understanding or consent. Cockcroft et. al (1972: 308) support this argument and state that,

"The theory of development formulated in highly industrialised countries, does not adequately explain (third world problems) and consequently cannot serve as a basis for a strategy and a policy of dealing with them successfully."

Any involvement within a PAR process in a developing country should mean awareness and a critical understanding of the potential for harm. PAR is an approach that is facilitated in the first instance by a researcher and there are many issues here surrounding the notion of both research and evaluation in developing countries.

Hettne (1995) assesses the involvement of Western academics and consultants in the 'developing world', and uses the terms academic imperialism to describe the ways in which third world projects and the locals involved with them are exploited by Western institutions in order to gain status within academic circles. He uses Streteen to illustrate his point:

"Research teams move into (the) country with already designed research projects trying to mine for data and statistics, using locals for semi-skilled activities like interviewing, filling out forms and interpreting, preserving for themselves the basic research design, processing and publishing. The researched country ... sees the results published in books or journals of industrialised countries, adding prestige to the foreign professors and their institutions."
(Streteen 1974: 9)

Mikkelsen would agree with this stance and maintains that all those involved in the development field are potentially culpable of using development situations to enhance either their professional reputation or that of their institution or agency. She reinforces the fact that participatory development should be owned by those that understand the situation of their community and uses Bentzon and Arnfred (1990) to illustrate:

"To get things moving in the right direction, development planners, practitioners and researchers alike, have to give up one of the fundamental self-established rights - the right to define what is the problem, whose problem it is, how to solve it and why." (p. 36)

Within the context of Eastern European development initiatives, Haynes (1998) has strong views concerning the role of Western academics, and goes so far as to imply that it is they who should take the blame for Russia's economic crisis. He concludes by suggesting that university departments

have become richer at the expense of the beleaguered Russian economy, whilst the Russian recipients of poor advice have no redress.

The principles of participatory development are clear and although facilitation is necessary at the outset of any process, the outsider should eventually sit back and leave well alone. In her discussion of facilitation, Milkkelson (1995) reminds us that facilitators should continuously examine their behaviour and should welcome error as an opportunity to do better. In other words, the outsider in the situation should have a self-critical awareness in order that the imperialism, academic or otherwise, does not surface.

Evaluation

For each development programme, whether initiated by either government or non-government sources, evaluation plays a vital role within the process. Careful monitoring should be involved from the outset, ensuring that the project is fulfilling aims and objectives and is reaching those for whom the project was initially created to assist.

The evaluation of social development projects has received much attention in terms of Third World aid and the majority of recent literature places paramount importance upon the involvement of local people in the evaluation and monitoring process.

It is unfortunate that in recent years, evaluation has come to be understood as an exercise that is more concerned with cost-effectiveness than with reflection and learning. In the context of social development Marsden and Oakley (1990) state that evaluation of community projects must be a learning process for all concerned with the particular project under investigation. They also argue that it should be developmental rather than judgmental.

Fuerstein (1988) offers a complete set of steps for participatory evaluation and recommends that all that are involved with the project or programme under evaluation are involved at all stages of the process. This will include selecting objectives and indicators, deciding upon evaluation methods, collecting the data and analysing and using the results.

Simple as it may sound, however, the process of participatory evaluation presents some difficulties when the evaluation is taking place within the context of a developing country and the facilitators of that process are from a different country and culture.

From one culture to another, those involved in different ways with a particular initiative will have vastly different ideas of how evaluation and monitoring should be conducted. The methodologies will be different, as will the cultural, social and academic traditions. Marsden and Oakley recognise the tensions here and state that:

“It is important to recognise these differing interests and to work through a methodology which can provide a forum where these might be publicly dealt with and which can produce something which is less hierarchical.” (1990: 9)

Garaycochea (1990: 66) is also concerned about cultural difference, specifically in terms of development projects. He states that,

“How social development is understood or conceived will have in turn an effect on how it is put into practice, and therefore how it is evaluated.”

Johnson and Wilson (1996) examine the concept of evaluation and monitoring in a similar vein. They consider the ways in which all those involved with the project have different agendas for evaluation and that different social groups with a stakeholding in a particular project may be excluded from the process completely.

They see participatory approaches to monitoring and evaluation as a recognition that there are power relationships amongst recipients, interveners and consultants, and that through the active involvement of people in making decisions about the implementation of the programmes that affect them, these unequal power structures can be addressed.

Tiongson-Brouers (1990) is particularly critical of those evaluators who are ‘flown in’ to a project for a few days and leave behind them a series of recommendations that cannot be grounded in the context of the area or even in the project itself.

The role of these evaluators or consultants has been much criticised, not least within the context of Eastern Europe. There is much potential to create

tension and harm when the consultancy is based purely upon the knowledge and experience of the foreigner, who attempts to transfer practices and methods from one cultural situation to another without regard for either the specific national and local differences.

The above critiques of participatory development would seem to paint rather a bleak picture. However, the intention has been merely to present some of the criticisms of the method and not to suggest that it should not be used at all - this would present an argument that would seem to deny the responsibility of sharing and assisting those countries that need aid in whatever form.

Freire (1972) suggests that it is dialogue that should be the fundamental principle at the centre of any development work, for when ideas are shared and discussed throughout the process of planning, acting and evaluating, the potential for harm is greatly reduced. As Freire states

"It is not our role to speak to the people about our view of the world, nor to attempt to impose that view on them, but rather to dialogue with the people about their view and ours." (1972:77)

The concept of dialogue is at the heart of the process of consultancy and after an analysis of the history of child care in the Former Soviet Union, Chapter 3 will go on to explore the role of the consultant within the very specific context of Eastern Europe.

Chapter 3 - The History of Family and Child Welfare Policies in the Former Soviet Union

Social policies in the Former Soviet Union (FSU) reflect the ideologies that guided them over the course of a century. Whilst essentially they are influenced by communist philosophies, many of the more charismatic leaders attempted to use youth and childcare policies to further their own ends and to manipulate the population into becoming ever more loyal servants of the communist ideal.

This chapter will examine the history of child care and family policy in the FSU, with particular reference to institutionalised child care. It will conclude by providing an up to date picture of the current situation and some of the initiatives and policies that have been put in place since the break up of the Soviet Union. Unfortunately there has been a limited amount of material published concerning the history of child welfare in Russia and central and eastern Europe, and this chapter will rely heavily on the few books and articles published to date.

Generally, it is assumed that the large children's institutions in Russia and central and eastern Europe, came about as a direct result of collectivist welfare policy. Whilst there are certainly ideological reasons for their existence, one can trace the history of these large children's homes back as far as the late 15th century.

Peter the Great (1682-1725) decreed that orphanages should be opened within monasteries and that the state and private donations would pay costs towards the upkeep of the children. Later on that century, Catherine the Great created large children's homes as a result of the research of Ivan Betsky, who had studied the care of illegitimate children around Western Europe. Homes opened in Moscow and St Petersburg but unfortunately during the first four years of them opening, 82 per cent of the children died.

During the 19th Century the population of children living in these large institutions soared and in Moscow, on average 17,000 children were received into homes every year with the infant mortality rate way above the average found within the general population (Tobis 2000)

When the 1917 revolution occurred it was Lenin who first had the task of creating child care and welfare policies that reflected socialist ideals. He was to be heavily influenced by Engels' (1884) analysis of the family in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*. Underpinning this work were issues around a critique of the unequal position of women. He argued that through the arrival of capitalism, wealth had been transferred from the private to the public sphere, of which women were the first social casualties (Harwin 1996). Engels maintained that as a result of this shift in wealth patterns, men had internalised the capitalist philosophy that one's social status is derived from one's capacity to create wealth. With access to wealth and therefore property, men were able to dictate their domestic situation so that,

"the woman was degraded, enthralled, the slave of a man's lust, a mere instrument for breeding children." (in Harwin 1990:4)

Engels concluded that in order to change the situation, the political economy had to be completely restructured along Marxist lines. To create equality, Engels presented two distinct solutions in terms of social policy. In the first instance he proposed a large national network of child care facilities which would release women from their domestic tasks and allow them to participate in the labour market. Secondly he proposed a network of public services that included laundries and communal dining rooms, that would further free women from their domestic work in the home. (Harwin 1990).

Lenin whole-heartedly accepted both Engels' analysis and his two recommendations for the transformation of social policy. The importance of the family was played down in terms of its function to bring up children and within the legislation of the time there can be seen a general mistrust of parents in terms of their ability to rear their own families. Harwin (1996) cites Goikhbarg, who was head of the committee that drafted the 1918 Soviet Code on Marriage, the Family and Guardianship:

"Our state institutions for guardianship ... must show parents that social care of children gives far better results than private, individual, inexpert and irrational care by individual parents who are 'loving' but in the matter of bringing up children, ignorant."

This mistrust of parents is rooted in the notion that since children would be the future of the Soviet nation their socialisation as socialists was paramount. Ukraine was the most enthusiastic of the Soviet states in terms of this legislation and decreed in 1920 that eventually boarding schools would assume the responsibility for bringing up children to adolescence (Harwin 1990).

Conversely, Russia was opposed to the complete absorption of children into institutions, mainly because it recognized that the proposed infrastructure to replace parents would take a considerable amount of time to create. Rather it concentrated its efforts on the creation of nurseries, crèches and other day care facilities. Whilst it saw the disintegration of the family as inevitable under the Soviet state, it also recognised that the USSR was in a pre-Soviet state and that until public services were more fully developed, the family would still have a role to play in bringing up children (Harwin 1990). However, the introduction of these new services was very slow indeed. By 1925 only three out of every hundred children had a nursery or day care place. Voluntary child care facilities had also been abandoned as the revolutionary leadership wanted services to be the sole responsibility of the state.

Anton Marenko created many of the collective approaches to bringing up children during the early years of the Soviet Union. He maintained that the focus of children's lives should be work, collective discipline and group competitiveness and that these principles should be evident in nurseries, school camps, youth programmes and children's institutions. It was Marenko's policies that formed the basis of child care in Russia for over 50 years (Tobis 2000).

As well as arguments for parents to place children willingly in the care of the state there was also a crisis about the numbers of children who were either orphaned or homeless. In 1922 it is estimated that there were seven million children said to be roaming the streets of the large cities of the Soviet Union. The sheer numbers were a result of several different factors. In the first instance before the revolution, Russia had been involved with foreign and civil wars, which Harwin (1990) suggests caused massive social dislocation. Second, the new economic policies introduced by the first

communist administration created poverty on a massive scale. Finally a poor harvest and a subsequent famine in 1920 caused people to leave the worst hit areas in the hope of finding food and shelter elsewhere. Children were orphaned or abandoned as a result of all of the above tensions. The Soviet leadership were simply unequipped to deal with this crisis. They had outlawed adoption in 1918 and so even if people were willing to give homes to children, it was not possible to do so. The authorities were forced to rely upon short term aid and relief. They took over disused churches and farm buildings so that the children at least had basic shelter, but the vast majority of these destitute children were taken to institutions. By the late 1920s, the problem of large-scale orphanhood receded. Madison (1968) claims that this was largely due to improved employment opportunities for young people, better welfare benefits and a return to family stability.

Most of the social policies introduced during the first few years after the 1917 revolution were ground-breaking attempts to both introduce women into the work force and to give them choices regarding marriage and child care which had never existed previously. The divorce laws were reformed, giving men and women equal custodial rights and maintenance laws ensured that the non-custodial parent provided regular payments. Also, abortion was made legal which was unheard of anywhere else in the world at the time and it was also available cheaply in order that poverty did not prevent women from having terminations. (Harwin 1990)

During the Stalinist period many of these social policies were revoked. During the early 1930s many Soviet citizens died as a result of either famine or Stalin's land collectivization policies. Shortly after, World War II wiped out 27 million more lives and as a result of all this Stalin introduced some severe pro-natalist policies. Abortion was outlawed, restrictions placed upon divorce, and placing children in care became relatively easy. (Tobis 2000:6) As a result of these policies the numbers of children's homes and the children in them increased dramatically. (Harwin 1996).

Lack of funding for the homes and an inability to deal with the numbers of children in them ensured that the conditions in these institutions were appalling and whilst there were laws introduced which enabled and paid people to foster, the numbers in children's homes still increased.

There were other policies that also had an impact upon the numbers of children living in children's homes. Amongst these was Stalin's policy to deport Kulak families to Siberia and Kazakhstan. The Kulaks were the richest of the peasant classes, and they owned land and livestock. One of Stalin's chief objectives was collectivization, therefore these characteristics ensured that the Kulaks were distinctly unpopular with the state. They were consequently dubbed the 'enemy of the people' and the entire USSR was provoked into a frenzy of racial hatred. Kulaks were shot, deported or committed suicide as opposed to giving up their land. Many of their children were orphaned or left behind by their parents and large numbers of them travelled to the bigger cities and became involved in gangs, street crime or prostitution, whilst others went into children's homes which were poorly maintained, overcrowded and lacking even the most basic of resources. (Harwin 1990).

One of the other significant policies adopted by Stalin was the encouragement of informers. During this period children were actively encouraged to inform on their parents for being anti-Soviet, the 1934 Criminal Code introduced the concept of class traitors and schools were also used to monitor the behaviour of families. The Commissar for Education gave schools the power to hand over parents who were deemed inadequate by either teachers or their own children.

When Khrushchev came to power there were two distinct aspects of his personal philosophy that were to have a direct bearing on family and social welfare policy. In the first instance Khrushchev recognised the importance of the humanitarian and welfare aspects of Soviet socialism, and secondly he wanted to distance himself from the repressive Stalin years. (Harwin 1990) During a speech given in 1956, Khrushchev openly condemned Stalin's oppressive policies and young Russians began to question socialism and its methods and beliefs. A youth festival in 1957 gave young people,

"a glimpse into Western society and the political, social and economic freedoms that were possible." (Harwin 1990:26)

Whilst the festival gave young people a fleeting glance at what Western life was like, it caused Khrushchev to be concerned about the future of the Soviet Union and he created a new youth ideology, fiercely enforced through fear

and oppression by completely closing off Soviet society from Western influence. For example, The Beatles were banned and dealing in foreign currency was punishable by death. Khrushchev wanted to create a strong, ideologically committed Soviet youth and as a result of this the boarding school concept of education was reintroduced. Parents were not forced to send their children to boarding schools, but there were incentives: class sizes were smaller; low income families did not have to pay fees and women would be freed to re-enter the labour market. However the philosophy behind the reintroduction of these schools was ideological and political as opposed to educational and it was hoped that they, "*would be able to create the perfect breeding ground for political indoctrination*". (Harwin 1990:28)

Harwin (1990) goes on to argue that the boarding schools scheme turned quickly from being a means of political education, to a form of social welfare. Eighty to one hundred percent of children were cases of need, children of unmarried mothers or came from large families living in deprived circumstances.

Tobis (2000) maintains that when Brezhnev came to power in 1964 he was faced with a social situation characterized by falling birth rates, high levels of divorce, large numbers of single parent families and debates concerning the role of women in the work place and the home. During this administration the Supreme Soviet created social policies that were aimed at strengthening the family and which enabled women to return to work. Family support programmes were introduced and there was an increase in the levels of vulnerable or socially disadvantaged children being cared for by the state.

Following on from the Brezhnev era, and in the spirit of Glasnost, there were official reports and articles published concerning the poor conditions in children's homes and the plight of the young people living within them. This led to government initiatives which promised improvements to the care system and which also pledged funding for support programmes for families experiencing difficulties. (Tobis 2000) Unfortunately these initiatives never really materialised, funding was needed elsewhere in the economy and fewer children were taken into care during this period. The numbers of

children being cared for by the state was at its lowest rate than at any other time during Soviet history.

During the late 1980s there were further criticisms made of the conditions of children's homes both within the Soviet Union itself and on an international level. With Glasnost and perestroika and the entry of Western journalists into the region the wider world became aware of the situation in Russia and throughout central and eastern Europe. The onset of transition and the cuts in social spending that accompanied it, meant that there was even more limited government funding available for children's homes. The last 12 years have seen interventions from foreign aid agencies and governments, interventions that have included humanitarian assistance within the children's homes and help with initiatives to introduce community-based child care services

Children's Homes During the Transition

Tobis (2000) maintains that at the beginning of the transition from communism to capitalism there were three main groups of children living in institutions. The first group attended boarding schools for several reasons. They were experiencing problems at home, they had had difficulties within a mainstream school, the family was unable to care for them, or they were at a boarding school for gifted children and young people.

The second group of children in care were those in the state children's homes, most of whom were socially vulnerable, abandoned by their parents (or placed there because parental rights had been withdrawn) and orphans. Tobis (2000) points out that the majority of children who live in institutions are not orphans in the traditional sense of the word. The terms 'social orphan' has been widely used because many of them have been placed into care because their parents are, for whatever reason, unable to care for them.

The third and largest group of children in care are those with physical and learning disabilities. Under Soviet rule, disabled children were categorized into those who could work and those who were unable. There was also the notion that 'normal' children should be separated from disabled children. (Tobis 2000).

The difficulties experienced by these different groups of children living in institutions are similar. However, harsh physical conditions, authoritarian educational regimes and poorly paid and un-qualified care staff with low morale all have a negative impact upon the resident children. The physical conditions are tough, but there are also less tangible aspects of living in state care. Children and young people in institutions are seen as a group within the population, as opposed to individuals in their own right, and attitudes of the general population are unfavourable towards them. (Ranschburg 1990:5 in Cornia and Sipos 1991) They are perceived as being delinquent and more capable than most other children of theft and other criminal activity. Harwin (1996) presents statistical evidence which suggests that one in five young people who have been in care end up with a criminal record. Also, many children have spent their entire lives in institutions and when they reach the age of sixteen they must leave the home without any kind of preparation or support. (Ibid. 1991)

Goffman (1961:5) examines the nature of what it is to be institutionalised. He states that individuals in modern society,

"Tend to sleep, play and work in different places with different authorities, and without an overall rational plan. The central feature of total institutions ... is a breakdown of the barriers ordinarily separating these three spheres of life."

The child who has been institutionalised will display a variety of characteristics ranging from the medical to the behavioural that are quite disturbing. Lesar Judge (1999) in an article concerning children adopted overseas, found that children who have spent long periods in institutions, find attachment to an adoptive carer very difficult indeed as a result of the poor adult to child ratio in children's homes. This might manifest itself in violent behaviour towards carers and inappropriate friendliness towards strangers.

When asked to leave the institution, the psychological effects of becoming used to 'normal' society must be difficult in the extreme. Before the transition young people leaving care were at least given a job which provided vocational training and housing. Currently, as a consequence of harsh economic cuts, these are no longer available. A study in

Czechoslovakia (Kadushin 1978:131) compared the development of children living in institutions with their peers living in families. The research found that whilst the physical development of both groups was similar, children in institutions were far more likely to experience deficits in social and language development. In the light of all of these difficulties, Tobis (2000:12) concludes that children living in institutions in central and eastern Europe became,

“damaged by regimented, impersonal, institutional life and became dependant, isolated from their families and the outside world. ...Vast numbers of children who have been socialised for one world, are unable to fit into another.”

The years of transition have seen some moves forward in terms of creating both children's homes that are less austere and establishing systems of community based fostering and adoption services. Before examining some of these initiatives, it is first necessary to explore some of the barriers to change on both national and local levels.

For people who have been working within children's homes for a long period of time, the prospect of de-institutionalizing child care is daunting. Their livelihoods are at stake, and residential care work is the only form of employment they have known. Tobis (2000) maintains that residential managers are a powerful force for the preservation of institutions and now that employment options are narrowing as a result of the withdrawal of government subsidies, they are yet more concerned.

One of the major barriers to change is the lack of an adequate social welfare infrastructure. Before the end of communism, personalised social services were in contradiction to the collective socialist ideals. Individual problems were played down and policies focused upon the communal. There was also a notion that through social services and the recognition of social problems, Soviet authorities would be admitting that there were faults within the system. Deacon (1992) also maintains that most social welfare policy was linked to the work place and it was the job of the trade unions to provide the limited assistance that was available to them.

Tobis (2000) also argues that a further barrier to creating social welfare strategies is that of the medical model of social care, which placed the emphasis upon health as opposed to social or emotional development. Social welfare personnel were doctors and civil servants, who were untrained in social work and as such could not see the social problems that underpin individual difficulties. Social work education was phased out during the period directly after World War II and never developed in the Soviet Union (Tobin 2000).

Harwin (1996) also recognizes that inappropriate legislation has been passed during the transitional period that has had a detrimental effect on children in care. The 1992 Education Act aimed to encourage the growth of a private education system. However, because the act reduced the length of full time, free, compulsory education, many of the children's institutions saw this as an opportunity to cut costs. Harwin (1996) concludes by stating that the children in the grades that were cut were often found on the streets because they lacked alternative accommodation.

Tobis (2000) also refers to legislation and policy in terms of some of the barriers to change. New laws have been introduced affecting social assistance, benefits and pensions (Deacon 1992) but few countries have created legislation that aims at reducing reliance upon residential institutions. Some countries in the region have managed to initiate legislative reform. A Lithuanian law authorizes the Ministry for Social Security and Labour to assist local authorities to develop pilot programmes for vulnerable groups, and in Romania a national system of child protection has been implemented locally in order that family-based alternatives to care can be created.

Whilst there have been some tentative moves forward in some countries, as stated above, the problem of public opinion remains. Whilst children's homes are seen by many as a last resort, many people believe that children's homes are a valuable resource in assisting vulnerable families (Tobis 2000). It would certainly seem that when people have been used to using certain models of child welfare for so long, it is difficult to present them with different alternatives. Harwin (1996) maintains that the original 1944 legislation which made it so easy for children to be placed in care is still

very much alive and active, one of the only areas of social welfare that has so far escaped the social spending cuts so evocative of the transition period.

As has been stated at the beginning of this chapter, Russia's dependence on large children's homes goes back way before state socialism and as such it is an important aspect of the culture. Communism simply reinforced the notion that large institutions were an acceptable form of caring for vulnerable children. In terms of the creation of new forms of social welfare models for vulnerable children, public support is crucial, for if parents were actively discouraged from placing their children in care, and were provided with options such as foster care or even adoption, there would no longer be a need for such institutions.

In some countries, the media has been used effectively to advertise the notion of fostering and adoption and in Moldova a television company, in partnership with a Western NGO, has provided free adverts and public information films about fostering and has made follow up feature style programmes about some of the success stories (Aubrey 2001).

Since the break up of the Soviet Union and the fall of communism in Eastern Europe, many international NGOs have provided assistance to children's institutions in the region. Initially this took the form of humanitarian aid including physical improvements to buildings, clothes, food, toys and modern laundry and kitchen facilities. Much of that aid continues to be brought into the region and whilst the children's homes themselves welcome the assistance, there are certain drawbacks to the continued provision of goods.

The aid that flooded into the region certainly improved the physical conditions within the children's homes. However, whilst this improvement provides immediate relief for the children, it only deals with the situation at this micro level. As has been stated earlier the problem of large institutions is far more complex than this: legislation, policy development and a restructuring or creation of adequate social services are the only ways through which the situation can be addressed. Also, the fact that there is a limited amount of funding for social welfare programmes, which means that governments and local authorities are reluctant to part with precious funds for children's homes when they see large amounts of goods and materials

going into them from Western organisations. Similarly, Western organisations, through providing large amounts of assistance could be seen to be reinforcing the notion that institutionalised care is an appropriate means for bringing up children. Also, with such wide-spread poverty and economic hardship in the region, parents could also be tempted to place their children into care more readily, because conditions in the homes may seem much better than what they are able to offer (Aubrey 2001; Tobis 2000).

On the subject of international aid there is also the issue of inter-country adoption. Since 1990 many children have been adopted from Russian and Eastern European orphanages. There is no concrete data in terms of the numbers of children adopted overseas, but Varnis (2001) states that in 1998 some 15,774 Russian children entered the United States alone.

International adoption has been criticized on a number of levels. Varnis (2001:39) presents some of its faults,

"Among the most vehemently asserted are that baby selling, and child trafficking, bribery and corruption, and exploitation of human capital of poor countries are involved."

He goes on to state that whilst there have been many conferences and moratoria on the issue, there are never any attempts at reforming the system. In the same way that if children's institutions may be neglected if they are continually supported by Western agencies, if it is consistently easy for overseas parents to adopt children, governments may not look at the root causes of the problem and implement the appropriate social policies.

Lesar Judge (1999:249) also presents some arguments concerning the impact of adoption upon the family. She argues that during the initial stages of the adoption process the child will be unable to communicate with its adoptive parents,

"This happens at a time when the child has left behind everything that is familiar and is encountering everything that is new and different, and their expression of grief in their own language is not understood by anyone."

The experiences that a child has had within an institution remain for a long time although Lesar Judge (1999) admits that there has been very little

research undertaken considering the effects of cross-cultural adoption. The loss of a culture and the effects of institutional living must have an impact and Lesar Judge (1999) concludes there is a need for longitudinal studies concerning the impact of inter-country adoption on children from Russia and Eastern Europe.

The history of institutionalised child care in the region is complex. There are large numbers of children still living in state care and there are further complexities concerning public opinion and people's acceptance of the institution as a way of life and as a part of the state structure. There are also problems around the attitudes towards children in care and the fact that they are not trusted by the wider community and are labelled as criminals. The problems are deeply rooted within Russian history going way back before the 1917 revolution and as such the attitudes that have grown alongside them will be difficult to overcome, let alone translate into appropriate social policy. The added dependence upon Western aid exacerbates the problem. However whilst humanitarian aid, it is argued, may create dependency, there is another form of assistance that is the primary focus of this research: that of consultancy and training.

The next chapter examines the alternatives to humanitarian aid and presents some examples of some of the initiatives that have taken place over the past twelve years in terms of social development consultancy in the region.

Chapter 4 - Consultants and the Development Process

Since 1989, large numbers of Western consultants have travelled to Eastern Europe with many objectives. They have been predominantly concerned with business management, market economics and the development of democracy. Indeed much of the literature concerning consultancy within the region is about the above and there is little that relates directly to the transfer of social development knowledge. Although there is considerable difference between consultancy around democracy and privatisation and social development, the concept of consultancy and the way in which it is conducted are similar. This chapter will begin with a critique of consultancy to the region, exploring some of the frustrations experienced particularly by recipients. It will continue with a presentation and analysis of two models of consultancy used to transfer social development knowledge, and will conclude with some explorations of ways in which consultancy practice could be improved in the light of the literature.

Critiques of Post – Communist Consultancy

As a previous chapter has already argued, the FSU was once a super power, its peoples taught to view the West as imperialistic, and inherently wrong. Socialism as a forerunner to communism was sold as the ideal political system and Western capitalism was rubbished as being antiquated and flawed. Having lost all status as superpower, and having been reduced to being labelled 'the Second World', eastern Europeans are now having to face the indignity of receiving assistance from the very people that they were once taught to despise.

The theme that lies beneath much of the literature around consultancy to central and eastern Europe is resentment that the consultant is there at all. There is an underlying tone of bitterness, which could very well be based on loss of global status and reinforced by the lack of sensitivity of consultants working in the region.

Gilbert (1998:2) presents a summary of some of the key aspects of consultant behaviour that eastern European recipients find particularly insulting, these include:

“Resentment at the rates of remuneration that Western consultants attract, irritation with consultants who after six or seven visits still do not understand more than a smattering of the language and dismay that few consultants seem prepared to live in a country for more than a few days at a time.”

Remuneration is an issue also raised by Holden (1998), particularly the way in which consultants tend to flaunt their wealth whilst in-country, staying in plush accommodation, with the ability to live very comfortably whilst many people in the region are experiencing considerable poverty. Holden (1998:25) quotes a Russian manager to demonstrate how some consultants are perceived,

“They want the benefits of a European lifestyle that Moscow and St Petersburg offer, and get paid hardship money as well.”

The major cities of the region have certainly developed to cater for the needs of the rich consultant. In Kyiv, where much of the in-country field research took place, there are many new bars and restaurants that have been opened since the early 1990s and they are generally crammed with Western people, with only a smattering of wealthy Ukrainians. As has been discussed earlier, cuts in social spending in the region, rocketing inflation levels and high levels of unemployment have resulted in widespread poverty. Blatantly flaunting wealth in a country where many are struggling to survive must surely reinforce attitudes of resentment.

From the literature it would appear that attitudes of Western consultants towards the post-communist situation creates considerable unease. In Eastern Europe, Wedel (1998:10) argues that the region is perceived by Westerners to be ‘backward’ and its peoples ignorant. As the region is receiving development aid from the West, consultants are quick to make comparisons with the ‘Third World’ when actually the post-communist situation is very different. Unlike the Third World, there are high levels of literacy, sound school systems and compulsory education to the age of 16. Higher education is widely available for those wishing to undertake both undergraduate and post-graduate degrees. Also the region is highly industrialised with a skilled work force. Wedel (1998:10) concludes:

"While problems such as over-population and illiteracy figure prominently in development models, the industrialised and highly literate countries of the 'second world' present new development domains."

Consultants arrive and present solutions based upon capitalist models of working, without any thought as to cultural or social context. Marcic (1993:29) argues that in her experience of the Czech Republic, many managers are resentful of Westerners who arrive, offer them misguided resolutions to the difficulties they face, and at the same time belittle their Czech colleagues leaving them to wonder what difference their input has actually made. She concludes with a quote from a Czech manager who complains that he and his colleagues are *"Tired of being treated like monkeys in trees by Westerners."*

Alongside insulting eastern colleagues, consultants also run the risk of actually preventing change occurring. Eastern Europeans understand that their systems are inadequate and that their economies need to be overhauled, and as such, they are loath to challenge the consultancy process. The research will show that recipients will not complain about what they are receiving because they feel that this may affect future assistance. Often the only means of redress they have is described by Wedel (1991:36) who argues that people ultimately have the power to,

"actively or passively frustrate, encourage, subvert, facilitate or otherwise alter the aid programmes as they are conceived by the donor"

The attitude of these consultants perhaps reflects the colonialist history of aid. Consultants arrive in the region believing that they are transforming old, outdated systems and replacing them with the 'right' systems, coming as they do from a globally dominant capitalist economy. Gilbert (1998) uses a medical metaphor to illustrate.

"Called in to investigate a case of an ailing business or organisation, they carry out a diagnosis, prescribe a course of action ... they present a large bill and then move on to the next patient."

The inference would seem to be that the Western consultant has all the expertise and that the recipient must place their trust in them because they

have none. The consultant knows what is wrong and presumes to be able to fix it, where the recipient is presumed not to have any expertise.

The medical metaphor is a useful tool with which to examine the nature of the consultant/recipient relationship. To treat a patient effectively, a doctor must know about them. He or she would have a medical history of the patient, including details of hereditary conditions. They would know about the social circumstances of the patient and the extent to which their illness could be a result of this. In short, they would have a complete picture of the patient and all the information would be used in order to create a plan for treatment.

The consultant in central and eastern Europe, does not attempt to build such a picture. Holden (1998) and Gilbert (1998) suggest that the lack of cultural understanding and sensitivity is a real barrier to successful working relationships. Gilbert (1998) offers an example of this. She argues that often, Russian managers are perceived as being lazy when they leave their work earlier than would their Western counterparts, when actually, they are going to their second jobs which they need to be able to support themselves and their families, in countries where inflation is high, wages low and poverty levels rising.

Wedel (1998) reinforces this arguments and also raises the question of the lack of knowledge that consultants have of the situation within which their colleagues in central and eastern Europe are working. In her experience many Westerners on short-term contracts within the region were entirely unfamiliar or even disinterested in local conditions. They did not take into account the effects of a planned economy and state socialism, which Wedel (1998:56) maintains, "*Are critical aspects for the starting point of any reform*".

Jankowicz (1996:143) is in accord with this and examines how the two parties could work more successfully together, based on a recognition that each are experts on their own systems. Russians or eastern Europeans have an in-depth knowledge of a post- command economy within which a market economy, if relevant and appropriate, must be made to work. Western consultants will have knowledge of a market economy and,

"With both having equal knowledge of the phenomena they seek to explain ... this redefinition concedes equality of status to both participants, with both having equal knowledge of the phenomena they seek to explain." (1996: 143).

Aside from the above difficulties experienced by recipients, the most fundamental practical difficulty is that of language. As stated above, few of the Western consultants operating in the region know more than a smattering of the local language. They also often have a limited understanding of the complex social situation from which the language has been shaped and developed. Jankowicz (1996: 143) suggests that within the context of cross-cultural consultancy, language should not merely be seen as a means of communication. He maintains that the language is a tool that is used to name concepts and that it is also a product of the culture and society from which it evolves and within which it develops. He argues that concepts should be redefined in order that both trainers and recipients have a clear understanding and equal knowledge of that which they seek to explain.

As well as providing an equal knowledge base for both consultant and recipient, Jankowicz (1996) also maintains that the consultant should be aware of the nuances within any language that could further complicate communication. Idioms should be learned in order to be effective within a different language, and certainly within Russian there are different protocols, which if not observed could prove to be embarrassing or even insulting.

Holden (1998) discusses the issue of protocol in terms of addressing people. He states that in Russian there are polite forms of the word 'you', as in the French 'vous' and the German 'sie', and there are very different ways of addressing those with whom you have either a formal or informal relationship. There are also different rules for men when addressing women.

Another aspect of Russian communication is highlighted by Hingley (1978) who states that the Russian (or indeed Soviet people – see Glossary of Terms) tend to be under-communicative. This refers to the tradition of keeping one's lips sealed, of not saying more than one knows and never

saying anything that could be incriminating, or potentially of use by the interlocutor at a later date. Hingley (1978) speaks of under-communication as an obsession with secrecy and claims that Russians are obsessed with information based upon rumour, innuendo and the grapevine. Not only is this important in terms of considering the effect that it will have on the consultation process, it is also an example of how language and communication difficulties cannot simply be overcome by using an interpreter, and that there are deeper differences and complex sets of meanings attached that may not be understood even with fluency in Russian.

From the Russian perspective, Holden also examines Russian attitudes to the English language and states that Russians feel that there are many words that are seeping into their language from Western media and advertising and that their own language is under threat. Wilson and Donaldson (1996) reinforce this stating that,

"(Russian) sociologists complain that children today can name the foreign candy bars but cannot recite the poetry of Alexander Pushkin."

There are many factors that impact upon the transfer of knowledge, language difficulties present certain problems but consultants often travel to Eastern Europe with notions that Western knowledge is the only form of acceptable knowledge. This manner with which some consultants have entered the Eastern European arena is best illustrated by the missionary metaphor.

Kostera (1995) states that alongside a new set of techniques and methods, the old Christian missionaries also brought a new set of norms and values. The same could be said of the consultants to the East who hope to convert people to capitalism and the values and culture attached to it, whilst at the same time perceiving eastern European ways of working to be of less value, and behaving accordingly.

Social Development Consultancy

Before examining some of the issues related to social development consultancy, it is first necessary to explore both the current situation in

Eastern Europe in terms of social welfare, and its history during the communist era.

Communism was said by its proponents to be the perfect state, and as such, the existence of social work would have been a contradiction, and an acknowledgement that problems existed. During communist times, there were relatively few social work initiatives and no training courses for social workers in many of the Eastern Bloc countries. Whether artificial or not, most communist states boasted full employment and all welfare, pensions, sick pay and other benefits were received through one's work place. Communist ideology regarded the family as bourgeois, and communal institutions were favoured. There were no social workers, children's homes were managed by 'educators' and juvenile offenders were either dealt with through schools or psychiatric departments within hospitals. (UNICEF 1997; Bridge 1999; Szavai 1994)

After the events of the late 1980s and early 1990s, the situation altered completely and as has been mentioned earlier, all the countries of the former Eastern bloc were encouraged to adopt the rules of a free market economy. Full employment became a notion of the past, inflation soared and many found themselves experiencing severe poverty. Alongside the need to protect vulnerable people against the worst effects of such a dramatic transition, there was also the general feeling that the introduction of professional social work and welfare structures would assist with the transition to democracy and civil society. (Bridge 1999)

In the first instance and as a result of media coverage of the poor state of children's homes in the area, Western nations were quick to respond with basic emergency aid and at the same time, funding became available to support consultancy initiatives to the region for a wide variety of projects and a range of different social welfare initiatives.

From the literature available, the training of social workers has been the most popular target for funding. Universities in the West obtained financial resources from TEMPUS programmes to create partnerships with Eastern institutions in order that social work training could be introduced for the first time in many decades. British non-government organisations (NGOs)

also obtained grants or developed partnerships with counterparts in post-communist Europe.

The programmes that came out of all this funding can essentially be divided into two different models or methods through which social workers, or social work tutors are trained. The first method, the 'exchange model' consists of international study visits, whereby Eastern European social work managers and practitioners are invited to the United Kingdom to spend a period of time in a British university (Rachman 1994; Hill and Cairns-Smith 1995). The second method, the 'consultancy model' is concerned with consultants visiting host institutions in Eastern Europe and providing short periods of consultancy and training in-country. Examples of these two approaches are presented below.

1. The Exchange Model

Rachman (1994) presents her experiences of an Anglo-Armenian social work training project. During 1990, an Armenian University approached the London School of Economics with a view to creating a School of Social Work in Armenia. After gaining funding from various international philanthropic bodies, it was decided that over a period of three years, two Armenian lecturers would come to England to be trained at the LSE in various social work disciplines, including social work theory and practice, psychology, and social policy. At the end of each year the two lecturers would return to their institutions to implement the training in their native university.

As a result of the training received, the structure of the sociology course at Yerevan University has been redesigned to include a specialist diploma in social work, which is optional towards the end of the course. Many aspects of social work are taught including, criminal justice, family work, deviant behaviour in children, child abuse and mental health social work.

On a practical level, the visiting lecturers received teaching, attended seminars and individual tutorials and following on from this, created a programme of training for their institution in Armenia. The first phase of the project ended with a round table conference in Armenia, where

lecturers who had undergone the training presented papers, as did some of the new Armenian social work students.

As part of the programme, lecturers from the LSE also visited Armenia and as well as providing consultancy on social work, they also had discussions with high level politicians including the Minister of Social Affairs. The Western academics also visited universities to give lectures and to talk to students about their experiences of social work and the situation in Armenia in general.

In conclusion, Rachman (1995) states that the programme had met its primary objectives in that a programme of social work training had been created at Yerevan University. The next phase of the project aims to provide training for unqualified staff working in agencies, who will then supervise placements for social work students from the university.

2. The Consultancy Model

The consultancy model relies predominantly upon visits by English professionals to the specific Eastern European country. Sellick (1997) offers a useful example of this in a project that aimed to develop social work practice in Romania.

The project aimed to develop stronger links between universities offering social work courses and children's institutions. Sellick (1997) stresses that the work that was undertaken was based upon shared activity and the exchange of information. British social work academics presented their research and their Romanian colleagues presented examples of their work around child welfare in their country.

The work that was conducted was discussion based, with small group work and seminar sessions with Romanian social workers. Participants were encouraged to share their experiences with consultants who in turn discussed ways of delivering services in the UK.

The whole project was based upon the sharing of information, and the Romanian practitioners have built on the experiences of English social workers to inform their practice. Sellick (1997) concludes that there are many difficulties that social workers cannot overcome, these include

vast under-funding of state social services, lack of job opportunities for qualifying workers and poor conditions compared with Western standards.

The above models are very similar to much of the work that has taken place all over Eastern Europe and there are similar difficulties and issues that arise out of both models. The first model invites people from Eastern European to come to study in the UK and Rachman (1994) admits that there are some difficulties that were associated with this. The chief obstacle was that of language and the difficulty of studying in a foreign language. This soon became apparent for the Armenian lecturers in the first example. However it is not simply language that was the difficulty but also the concepts and the knowledge that underpins them. The language of British social work has developed over a period of many decades and within the cultural context of a Western democracy. Social workers become used to using such terms as participation and empowerment, without considering the context of these words and how they might be translated.

One of the other problems experienced by the visiting lecturers was that of teaching style. Eastern Europeans are used to a didactic model of teaching and often found it hard to cope with informal seminars and small group discussions. There were also difficulties in that the Armenians had been university lecturers for many years and experienced some problems with becoming students again. Rachman (1994) admits herself that working in a foreign language and environment and adapting to British customs and norms must have been extremely stressful. The fact that, in Britain, the Armenians did not have their usual familial or social support structures must have intensified the situation.

In terms of positive outcomes of the exchange, the Armenians were able to learn new ways of working. Rachman (1994) discusses the importance of experiential learning and argues that,

“Most adults learn not from instruction, but from unhampered participation in a situation which is meaningful for them.” (Illich 1993 quoted in Rachman 1994).

One of the objectives of work within Eastern Europe is to present alternative methods of work and learning. Social development consultants are

particularly careful not to impose new ways of working upon their colleagues in the region. Many of them are aware of the principles of anti-oppressive practice within a development context, and understand that simply transporting a tried and tested method in one country, to another where culture and experiences of education are not taken into account, is unrealistic. However, the very idea of consultancy would seem to be about offering alternatives. There have been many criticisms of consultants who attempt to impose their own values and perspectives upon recipients, but it would seem that new ways of learning can be easily adapted to a different cultural context without imposing the content. The Romanian students found these new ways of working unusual at first, but once they had experienced them over a period of days, they enjoyed the small group work and slowly began to enjoy the participative approaches offered by the trainers. The data will show that many of the Ukrainian participants not only created change as a result of the work undertaken, they also successfully used small group work methods and activities with their colleagues and also with children and young people.

Being exposed to new methods and ways of working can be daunting. Sellick (1997:50) used a small group work model when training social work students in Romania and describes how students seemed in the first instance to be confused by this,

"We were struck by how resistant people were to working in small groups . . . and how difficult it seemed for many people to make contributions to the sessions. People sat fixed to their seats and only a few participants joined in when invited to do so." (Sellick 1997:50)

However after the initial trepidation, the participants became accustomed to these new ways of working and introduced new ideas and methods to facilitate their learning. People in central and eastern Europe have worked within a rigid system for a long time. Didactic teaching was the norm and this was seeped in ideology with little room for any alternative. From such a limited experience, change is difficult, but once people are offered alternatives which seem to be enjoyable and which work for them they will feel confident about employing them in their own work with the appropriate cultural adjustments.

In spite of some of the successful consultancy work undertaken in the region, there are problems that have arisen that have caused irritation in recipient countries. In the first few years of foreign assistance in Eastern Europe, Western organisations were unsure about the level of help needed and as such,

"would come with training that was based on Western standards and set up training programmes which might be totally irrelevant to the needs of the people locally." (Hayward 1996:14).

As Gilbert (1998) pointed out earlier on, both a lack of understanding of the cultural and social situation in country, and no appreciation of the conditions within which people live and work, causes people to question the extent that they are being 'assisted. '

The history of aid and development is packed with examples of how Western institutions and organisations have imposed certain models upon the 'developing' world, based upon their own definitions of need. Cemlyn (1995) suggests that this is continuing within an Eastern European context and suggests that schemes that aim to export economic values and systems to Eastern Europe are reflected within current social work consultancy in the area. She argues that social work consultancy in Eastern Europe cannot but reflect the values, ideologies and practices that are inherent within British social work. She questions the extent to which social work models can be shared without exposing the values and philosophies that underpin them and continues:

"Some of our key social values and principles, such as equal opportunities, empowerment, and user control, to whose development we are committed, may be absent or even opposed in the Russian framework." (Cemlyn 1995:91)

Hayward also maintains that alongside the social work values that are exported to the region, many organisations have been involved in the area with a view to spreading a religious message. He concludes by stating that,

"It's no surprise that (people) feel a bit disempowered, disenfranchised, and also fairly cynical about what Western Europeans and Americans are actually trying to do." (1996:14)

As has been argued earlier in the chapter, partner agencies in the post-communist world are all too aware of the amount of money that is available for providing consultancy and assistance in the region. Hayward (1996) argues that many people in Eastern European countries have quite simply become disillusioned with Western assistance. When aid arrived in the first instance, many had high expectations but became quickly disappointed. Hayward (1996) goes on to argue that this was particularly the case with charitable organisations and trusts. Large grants were expected from these institutions, but many were not in a position to provide it. As a result of these disappointments, Hayward argues that there has been a backlash and increased resistance to the input of Westerners.

Henderson (1996) would agree with this argument and goes on to be very critical of Western organisations for monopolising the money that is available to Eastern European programmes. He argues that over 75 per cent of the money directed at the region falls into the hands of research and consultancy organisations from the West. To address this, he says that there is a clear need to support indigenous NGOs in the area, for it is they who will continue working towards the same aims, when the consultants leave.

Ramon (1999) also discusses the concept of funding and sustainability. She maintains that many of the programmes financed from European countries or the EU itself, provide only a limited amount of financial support and time for work to take place. She goes on to argue that more time and money is needed if projects are to be successful and that it is sustained commitment that is required over a longer period.

What organisations in the region appear to need, are not empty promises and expensive consultancy which seems to create little positive difference, but a commitment from partner agencies in the West to work with them to establish a strategy for sustainable change. Henderson (1996:25) concludes that Western NGOs, need to rebuild the trust that has been lost and finally:

"Need to make the principles on which they operate much clearer in order to demonstrate their commitment to supporting the development of their opposite numbers."

According to UNICEF there also appears to be a lack of clear guidelines to inform Western organisations of some of the difficulties of working in the

region and the potential for creating more harm than good. Working with British social work practitioners and working with eastern European professionals is entirely different. People in the region perceive social work very differently and for many it is a new concept altogether. Ideological indoctrination and bureaucracy resulted in a certain mindset that is difficult to leave behind. Versceg (1994:11) uses an example based on her experiences with Hungarian community workers, and their reluctance to make decisions. She argues that under communism, many aspects of life were in the control of an institution or agency. Education, work and welfare were all strictly controlled by the state and there was a strong ideology that guided the actions and policies of these institutions. Now that the state has relatively little control, people are still declaring that it is, *“Not my job – it’s the job of the state or the local authority.”* This obviously has a potential impact upon the efficacy of the training provided. One must wonder how such attitudes interfere with people’s abilities to be able to take on new responsibilities and challenges within their work, and the extent to which consultants have taken this into account.

She also maintains that people are still very unsure of the role of Civil Society. There were very few voluntary initiatives under communism, often they were illegal because they were seen to be in opposition to the Party and as such it was dangerous to be involved with them. Individual creativity was also stifled as communist ideology emphasised the importance of the collective. One must question the extent to which any programme of assistance will succeed if people continue to suffocate individual spirit and being fear independent voluntary agencies organisations that are beginning to emerge. Deep-seated fears take time to dissolve and changes in attitude regarding new ways of working will take time.

Ramon (1999) concurs with this and reinforces the fact that consultants must understand that they are not in a position to influence sweeping changes. They should recognise obstacles such as the different psychological attitudes of people and that real change will occur if consultants,

“(engage) in the very slow process of attempting to change the values, knowledge and skills of workers and decision-makers in these countries.” (Ramon 1999:53)

One of the other difficulties related to social development in central and eastern Europe is the fact that there is little networking taking place in the region between agencies doing similar kinds of work. Indeed UNICEF (1996) have argued that more networking would mean that services are not unnecessarily duplicated and that if the aims and objectives of agencies were similar, and if they were working together, they would have a much greater impact. In the same way, if there were more international agencies and institutions working collaboratively, the development work carried out would ensure improved practice through working towards the same goals. (Aubrey 2000)

This chapter has concentrated mainly upon the practice of consultancy in terms of the models of consultancy that are taken to Eastern Europe with the aim of offering alternatives for the organisation and practice of social welfare. However, it is important to mention the extent to which international consultants can learn from their colleagues in post-communist contexts.

Slater (1995:29) uses his experiences of a social work exchange to Russia to highlight the extent to which he and his colleagues had learned from his experiences. He states that his team were keen not to characterise the Russian and British experience of social work as “backward” and “developed” respectively. Rather, he argues they should be,

“Interpreted as divergent, but equally significant individual experiences of attempting to promote the cause of social work within changing social structures.”

The British system of social work has been forced to undergo no small amount of change within the last few years, and indeed the introduction of more and more privatised services will probably mean yet more changes for social workers within the statutory sector. Within Eastern Europe the changes have been far more acute and have occurred over a decade, and Slater (1995) goes on to state that the team that accompanied him to Russia, saw the relevance of the Russian experience within their situation. Slater also goes on to recognise the positive learning potential there is in working in a different language. He states that this,

"Helps us to appreciate the difficulties that our clients have to endure when subjected to similar conditions." (Slater 1995:29)

Monk and Singleton (1995) through their experiences of work in the Czech Republic say that they came to look at social work in the UK with a different perspective. They maintain that there is often a certain despondency amongst social development professionals in the UK and they learned from their experiences in Eastern Europe that there is capacity for change. Both British and Czech social workers are learning to operate within a client-orientated social work market, and as such there was an enormous amount of mutual support. They conclude thus:

"There is a striking optimism in the Czech Republic about change and excitement amongst workers who want to improve services . . . Sometimes in the UK ... we tend to forget that the capacity to make changes, however restricted, is in our own hands." (1995:48)

As more of the countries of central and eastern Europe are joining the EU, more money is being introduced into the region in order that the political, social and economic infrastructures are in line with the regulations of the European Commission. Once the countries have actually joined, there will be considerable amount of Objective 1 funding available for the poorest areas. This will involve further consultancy and development of social welfare programmes. Over fourteen years of consultancy within the region, many mistakes have been made and there are many lessons to be learned if further assistance in the region is to be successful.

As has been argued above, there is the potential for enormous resentment within recipient countries, which could have a marked effect on the work undertaken. Flaunting Western wealth and treating eastern European colleagues as 'backward' creates antipathy. Consultants should remember that ultimately people will be responsible for implementing change, and as such, creating successful working relations with them based upon mutual respect creates a productive environment. The most successful strategies for change might end in failure if the people involved in the process are not valued, consulted or respected.

From the literature discussed above, it would also appear that eastern Europeans value consultants who have knowledge of their particular

circumstances. An understanding of their work culture and the obstacles they have to face to implement change should be an integral part of the consultant's briefing before visiting the country. Sensitivity to difference must be a crucial element of the work, as must be an interest in the work that is the focus of the consultancy. The overall message from the literature would indicate that the incentive for work in central and eastern Europe must be a commitment to creating effective and sustainable change, not the exorbitant fees.

This chapter has given some examples of the kinds of social development consultancy that have been taking place in Eastern Europe and the difficulties, criticisms and positive aspects of the work. This research is concerned with social action training in Ukraine and the next chapter will examine the process of social action consultancy and how through a very specific process, participants are asked to name their problems and concerns, address why they exist and to take action based upon their discoveries and their own perceived needs and limitations.

Chapter 5 - Social Action

Social action is a group work model described by Mullender and Ward (1991) as:

“an effective and empowering vehicle for change, based on anti-oppressive values and capable of confronting the entrenched mechanisms of power.”

It is a model that relies upon the process of asking the group or community what their problems or concerns are, and continues by asking them to see the root causes of these issues and the economic and social mechanisms that reinforce them. It concludes with the group taking action based upon the first two stages and then reflecting upon that action before beginning the whole process again.

Paulo Freire

To unravel some of the concepts surrounding social action as both a model and a process, it is first necessary to examine some of the theories and philosophies that have influenced it. The most fundamental of these lie within the work of Paulo Freire.

Freire was an adult educator in South America. In 1964 he was exiled from his native Brazil during a military coup as a result of his work with the rural poor. He continued his work in Chile and went on to teach at Harvard University before returning to Peru to become the Minister of Education in Sao Paulo. (Institute of Paulo Freire) The core of his philosophy was a critique of traditional educational method that denied the experiences of students and which at its heart is a consensual form of control. Ellul (1964) suggests that traditional methods of education have a number of different features which aim to adapt learners to consensual controls. These are: career choices (specialization), authority (dependency), and the good life (consumerism). He goes on to argue that school also encourages competition (the rule of the fittest), whilst at the same time maintaining order (social conformism).

Freire was critical of this form of what he termed ‘banking education’ which he believed negates the experiences of students and as such holds no

relevance for them. He goes on to describe the role of the teacher in the traditional educational setting:

"His task is to 'fill' the student with the contents of his narration – contents which are detached from reality, disconnected from the totality that engendered them and could give them their significance. Words are emptied of their concreteness becoming a hollow, alienated and alienating verbosity" (Freire 1974:52)

What Freire is arguing is that the curriculum presented to students within a traditional educational setting is out of context for them and meaningless in terms of their own lives. He also maintains that many of the experiences of students are rooted in oppressive structures:

"Curriculum which ignores racism, sexism the exploitation of workers, and other forms of oppression at the same time supports the status quo. It inhibits the expansion of consciousness and blocks creative and liberating social action for change." (Heaney 1995)

Freire's pedagogy, seeks to change the social order and to bring this about through unity and common experience. The 'curriculum' is transformed into an open forum which places teacher and student on the same level and which on the one hand, aims to produce a critical consciousness in people, whilst at the same time they learn the skills that they need to transform their own lives.

Before examining some of the terms of Freire's pedagogy and the process of empowerment that he advocates, it is first necessary to examine some of the theories and philosophies that have influenced him. Taylor (1993) suggests that Freire was influenced by many different schools of thought ranging from Aristotle to traditional Catholic theology and international Marxism.

In terms of his critique of banking education, Taylor (1993) argues that Freire was very much influenced by Febvre and Bloch and their French journal 'Annales d'histoires economique et social'. They argued that history was socially contextualised in that it is not about a series of chronological dates and eras but a succession of cultural moments which were either deemed important from the perspective of the mentality of people at the time, or by the historian himself. In this sense one can begin to see Freire's critique of banking education in that history is based upon what others perceive to be important and may have no relevance to a student

of history. We know for example that Western history has been written by predominantly by men and often excludes the experience of women and Black people.

Febvre went on to examine the notion of a history of mentalities and presented an analysis of conscious and unconscious forms of thought. Taylor maintained that this gave Freire the notion of either accelerated or retarded learning, which he translated as critical and naïve consciousness respectively.

Within the work of Freire, specifically in terms of histories of knowledge, there are also elements of Foucaultian philosophy. Foucault argued that history should not be a series of cold facts from the past, rather it should be treated as, *“Living evidence of what people have done and said, of relationships, of people, in the world”*. (Taylor 1993:36). One can see this philosophy reflected in the way that Freire talks of ‘writing the world’. For him the world is subjective with the individual as the subject rather than the cold object of history.

In terms of education more generally, Freire was influenced by several different sources. One such source was Freinet’s philosophy of education was one that was based on the fact that it is a life-long process. He argued that education was often termed a preparation for life but that in reality

“If education is supposed to be a preparation for life, but is not actually a way of life itself, then it can never be the preparation it claims to be.” (in Taylor 1993:37)

In other words, he believed that learning was a way of life and that school was a means through which children can experiment with learning in terms of work, play and social relations. Within this context the teacher is the agent of social change, encouraging children to develop a consciousness and to *“Break into what is accepted and unquestioned”*. (Taylor 1993:38)

One of the other main influences on Freire's pedagogy was that of the Catholic church and its theology. The church placates those who suffer injustice with the promise of happiness in the next life. However, during the 1960s there were elements of the Catholic Church that began to recognize social injustice and challenge its foundations. A statement in 1969 signed

by two Bishops and 350 priests concluded that, *"the revolutionary option which has scandalized so many, can well be the result of the purest act of conscience"*. (Gerassi 1971:48 in Taylor 1993:40).

The above quote sees the church admitting that they had a responsibility to fight social injustice and to bring about social change. The social injustices that people experience are often wrapped up in wider political and economic issues, and to challenge inequality it is necessary to challenge these structures.

Aristotle maintained that all humans were political beings and there is evidence of this philosophy within Freire's pedagogy. Taylor (1993) argues that Freire was influenced by this to the extent of his stressing the importance of dialogue, through which humans can become critically and politically aware or conscious.

The process of Freire's pedagogy is the means through which people develop critical consciousness and it is necessary to revisit the works of Freinet to observe some of the parallels of his thought. The three essential principles of Freinet's work were: expression, experimenting and rehearsing and action and Taylor (1993) maintains that within this one can distinguish Freire's cycle of 'see, judge, act'.

Freire's pedagogy has been influenced by many diverse philosophies and theories of education. Taylor (1993:34) maintains that Freire often 'poaches' ideas and blends them into his own ideas, using them to support his own arguments and that,

"the text that Freire offers is actually a complex tissue of his own work and the threads of other pedagogies and philosophies which he has woven all together across the loom of his experience and his genius."

Pedagogy of the Oppressed

The main tenet of Freire's pedagogy can be seen within a letter he wrote to literacy teachers in Chile in 1971, where he stated that:

"To be a good liberating educator, you need above all to have faith in human beings. You need to love. You must be convinced that the fundamental effort of education is to help with the liberation of

people, never their domestication.” (in Maclaren and Leonard 1995:25)

Freire was concerned with social change and social justice. He believed firmly that education and learning have social consequences and are not merely a package of skills and facts to be transferred by the teacher into the minds of children. Rather he defines education as:

“One place where the individual and society are constructed which can either empower or domesticate students.” (Maclaren and Leonard 1995:25)

Freire goes on to suggest that banking education mirrors many elements of an oppressive society. It regards humans as manageable beings who are easily manipulated and who are expected to adapt. The more they adapt, the easier they are to oppress. Within a capitalist society there are punishment mechanisms for those who do not adapt sufficiently. There exists a culture of blame whereby those who do not conform are seen as deviant. Freire uses the example of welfare recipients, who are treated as individuals who have deviated from mainstream society and are labelled as incompetent and idle. (Freire 1972). In the same way Mullender and Ward (1993) suggest that over successive Conservative governments, public ills were reconstructed as private troubles. Social policy legislation hit the poorest sections of the population, and if people could not adequately provide for themselves they were forced to beg for welfare, but only if they were considered deserving. Mullender and Ward (1993) conclude by arguing that as people have to struggle so hard to keep themselves and their families, they are far less likely to come together to fight against the system that oppresses them.

Freire's (1972:12) alternative to banking education is termed problem-posing education, which is based on dialogue. He notes:

“Through dialogue, the teacher of the students and the students of the teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student and student-teacher.”

This relationship is based upon mutual learning where the teacher recognizes that he learns from the students just as much as they learn from him, both growing as part of this process.

The objective of this problem posing education is that it enables people to become critically aware and allows them to unveil reality. Once they have an understanding of the world and of themselves as subjects within the world, they develop the power to transform it. In other words, they come to a critical understanding of the means through which they are oppressed, and as a group they take action to change it. Most importantly people begin to ask the question 'why?'. Freire maintains that this is the question the oppressors do not want the oppressed to ask, for if they do, it will mean a challenge to their power.

For Freire, the entire notion of dialogue is based upon equality, for one is not able to enter into a dialogue if one sees oneself as superior, or as part of the group that has the monopoly on knowledge and truth, or if one is afraid of being displaced. As stated at the beginning of this section, Freire maintains that to enter into dialogue one has to have faith in humankind and one must also be a critical thinker, ready to unwrap the structures that hold the oppressed down, and with them challenge and transform that which keeps them in their place. If one is a naive thinker one sees oneself as an object in the world that has to adapt, a truly critical thinker believes that the important thing is to change that reality. Critical thinking perceives the universe as, "*A domain that takes shape as I act upon it*". (Furter 1966:26 in Freire 1972:73).

Without critical thinking, Freire maintained that the oppressed remain within a culture of silence. The dominant members of society control the oppressed and alienated and,

"Prescribe the words to be spoken by the oppressed through the control of the schools and other institutions, thereby effectively silencing the people." (Heaney1995:9).

Freire explores this culture of silence in global terms and argues that in so-called under-developed colonized countries it can be seen in its stark reality. Whilst he uses the example of Third World countries, it could also be related to the situation in Eastern Europe.

After the communist experiment the countries of central and eastern Europe were invited to re-enter the world, but this could only be achieved through Western capitalist societies dictating to the region how they would change

and act in order for them to be fully accepted. Freire uses the example of the Third World, but within some of what he says there are startling similarities to the situation in Eastern Europe.

Freire maintains that the Third World is perceived by 'developed' countries not merely as poor neighbours but as something threatening and evil,

"They see the third world as the incarnation of evil, the primitive, the devil, sin and sloth - in sum, as historically unviable without the director societies." (Freire 1974:39)

This perception of the inherent evil of the Third World is perhaps yet more relevant for Eastern European societies. At the height of the Cold War, the Soviet Union was the "evil empire" and one must question the extent to which these attitudes still exist.

Freire goes on to suggest that the director societies, that is to say Western capitalist societies, have an impulse to 'save' Third World countries,

" 'Educating' it and 'correcting its thinking' according to the director societies' own criteria." (Freire 1974:39)

In the context of Eastern Europe this would certainly seem to be what is occurring. In economic terms, international financial institutions have dictated to the region the steps that it should take in order to 'correct' itself. These dictates are not based upon the specific needs of central and eastern European countries, rather they are underpinned by the needs of the West to trade with a new region and to control the political status quo in order that it does not pose a threat.

Freire goes on to discuss the notion of mass society and it is possible to see the relevance of these concepts to the current situation of the introduction of the features of mass society to Eastern Europe that enables the West to hold the region in its place, in a similar way to how it controls the oppressed within its own countries. He maintains that within a mass society people are told what to think, how to act and how to behave,

"Ways of thinking become as standardised as ways of dressing and tastes in food. Men begin thinking and acting according to the prescriptions they receive daily from the communications media rather than their response to dialectical relationships with the world." (Freire 1974:81)

Mass society prevents people from thinking for themselves and from being critical of the world around them, because they are bombarded with images of how they must behave. They are lost because they are unable to take risks. (Freire 1974).

In Eastern Europe one can again see this in stark reality. Western mass media flooded into the country at the end of the last century and advertisements began to appear which promoted consumerism and Western stereotypes. As has been quoted above, it is because people are experiencing the difficulties of the poverty and unemployment that have arisen as a result of harsh cuts in subsidies and social spending, that they are unlikely to come together in protest. (Mullender and Ward 1993). There is also the added complication of the novelty of consumerism and mass society. People were limited in terms of what they could buy during the years of communism, and they were also restricted as to the amount of information they could get about the outside world. With such a flood of consumer goods and information about a world that was once hidden, they now have the access to that which they were once denied. Whilst people are concerned for their survival in such a harsh economic climate, and whilst they are bombarded with images of what they should have and how they should behave, they are further trapped within the culture of silence of which Freire speaks.

For Freire, the means through which people can break out of this culture of silence is the process of see-judge-act. It is through the action, reflection and dialogue that is part of this, that people can make sense of their situation and be enabled to take steps to transform it. However there are questions about the approach in the approach which are both practical and ideological.

Blackburn (2000) suggests that fundamentally Freire makes several assumptions concerning the 'oppressed'. Firstly he argues that Freirean pedagogy assumes that the oppressed are powerless, when in fact it is difficult to measure the extent to which people do not have power. The most oppressed groups in society could be said to have certain power in that they have the ability to sabotage and they have the option of non-cooperation. Blackburn (2000) uses the oppression of the Guatemalan Indians to explore this point. He maintains that whilst they were suffering

extreme and often violent forms of discrimination, they developed a 'culture of resistance' based upon their own experiences. As Blackburn (2000) argues and as has been argued above, Freire used the theories of many writers and philosophers to develop his pedagogy and these were based largely upon leftist European schools of thought and traditions. Blackburn concludes by arguing that within this perspective, "*Freirean and other participatory activists have tended to dis-value traditional and vernacular forms of power.*"

There are also certain issues surrounding the extent to which Freire neatly categorizes people as either oppressed or oppressors and it would seem that in a complex world it is not as easy to split people into such distinct groupings (Blackburn 2000). For example, in some contexts a man may be able to oppress a woman, but within a different setting, such as within the work context, the woman may possess more power than the man because of her higher status. Similarly a black man and a white man may both have oppressor characteristics, but a white man will be less oppressed because he lives within a society that is fundamentally racist. In this way it is feasible to suggest that people can be oppressors and oppressed at the same time.

On a more practical level there further problems within Freire's pedagogy and these issues concern the role of the facilitator or 'teacher-student'. Wuyts et al (1992) suggest that Freire is never actually clear who the facilitators will be. He speaks of a revolutionary leadership but does not specify of whom it will comprise and the extent to which they will develop their own critical consciousness. Freire also speaks of the facilitators as having very special qualities, in that they need to be able to allow the group to act based upon their own needs and interests and should not impose their own agenda upon the group. Blackburn (2000) argues that this presents a problem on different levels. In the first instance he maintains that the leader will have his own perceptions of power and oppression so that when he goes to facilitate a group he goes in with an agenda based upon his or her understanding. The group that he goes to work with may perceive their situation very differently, they may not label themselves as powerless or oppressed and may not want to use the empowerment model of the facilitator.

Also in terms of the educators there are further difficulties relating to the recognition of their own position of power. It is possible that facilitators may fail or be unable to,

"Strangle the oppressor within them, and may consequently misuse their position to manipulate those over which they (potentially) have so much power." (Rahnema 1992:124).

Freire places many expectations upon the educator, who is at the end of the day human and as such, entirely capable of manipulating or abusing power whether they are conscious of it or not. (As can be seen in the example given below).

Blackburn (2000) goes on to suggest that when people are used to being educated within the banking system, it is difficult to swap to Freire's pedagogy. He goes on to argue that some individuals may lack the interpersonal skills to be able to switch over to a pedagogical method of learning. In many ways, the dialogical approach can be very similar to a banking approach, for instance, where there are pre-defined objectives, with facilitators pretending that people have control of the agenda but manipulate rather than empower them. Blackburn (2000:12) once again uses a concrete example of how this has actually occurred. During the 1980s literacy crusade in Nicaragua, the Sandinista regime used Freire's approach to, *"promote a unified national revolutionary culture in an effort to homogenize the country's population"*. In this way the Sandanistan authorities were using Freire's pedagogy as a banking tool, as a means of imposing on the peasant population, certain information and ideologies that did not come from the people themselves.

Groups and organisations, particularly within the development context have used Paulo Friere's methods to work with oppressed people. Based upon their own professional and personal backgrounds, they will work with people in different ways and will develop the system to suit their own contexts. The Centre for Social Action is an example of this. Whilst they have been heavily influenced by the work of Paulo Freire, the CSA has its own style of working, which it has built over the years, and its own individual principles which guide its work. It is therefore necessary at this point to define social action as it is used by the CSA and to place it within

its historical context. Finally the process of social action itself will be presented and explored before the chapter concludes with an examination of how it has been used within an Eastern European context.

Social Action

Within its British context self-directed group work, or social action is based first and foremost upon anti-oppressive principles and the notion that people can gain collective strength through working in groups. Mullender and Ward (1993) maintain that as a result of consecutive Conservative governments, an approach was needed within a social and community work setting, that took account of the problems that people experienced as a result of oppressive social policies. They saw this approach as being openly collective with a value base that embraced all the principles of anti-oppressive working. It also recognizes the work that has been undertaken within feminism and anti-racism and that rather than see these as separate struggles,

“Male as well as female workers must find a practice which supports the women’s movement and white practitioners, as much as black, have a responsibility to work in a way which supports the activists struggles.” (Mullender and Ward 1993:10).

In this way practitioners are asked to *“combine their efforts with those of oppressed groups without colonising them”*.

Social action as it is used by the CSA, came about during the 1970s. Youth work during this decade was based upon models of social education. Arches (2001:1) goes on to argue that problems facing young people tend to be attributed to, *“Individual pathology or the breakdown of social norms,”* During the latter half of the decade there were moves to encourage young people to design and implement their own services and the term social action came about as practitioners saw themselves moving away from the social education origins of youth work into action centred community work. (Mullender and Ward 1993).

Ward and Boeck (1999) assert that there are three main characteristics of social action. Firstly, *“it was designed to distance itself from the ‘deficit’ and ‘blaming the victim’ approach”*. Secondly Social Action advocates that

only through careful questioning and understanding of the reason 'why', can the question of how be tackled. In other words to return to Freire, Social Action aims to engender in people a critical consciousness in order that they are able to identify the underlying causes that keep them in the situation that they are in. Ward and Boeck (1999:9) continue that through asking the question why:

"people have the opportunity to widen their horizons of what is possible, to break out of the self-perpetuating narrowness of vision, introspection and 'victim blaming' induced through poverty, lack of opportunity and exclusion."

Finally Social Action is process rather than outcome oriented. People are guided through a process which does not work towards a final result, activity or action but which is a *"way forward of discovery, and liberation, of dialogue of conscientization"*. (Ward and Boeck 1999:9). Once groups are clear about the situation and the underlying causes, they are then able to take action based upon the conclusions they have reached during the 'why' stage of the process. Once the action has been taken, the group reflects upon what they have achieved and the process begins again.

The Principles of Social Action

The Centre for Social Action is committed to working in an anti-oppressive way and as such, has created six principles which guide its work. These principles,

"encapsulate a set of beliefs about the unrecognized skills and capacities of people who may be marginalized by the wider community and asserts their rights to determine their own future, the inherent power of collective working and the ethical principles that should inform professionals working with groups such as these."
(CSA Newsletter 2001)

They are as follows:

1. *Social Action workers are committed to social justice. We strive to challenge inequality and oppression in relation to race, gender, sexuality, age, religion, class, culture, disability or any other form of social differentiation.*

Above all within this principle the Centre for Social Action recognises that all forms of oppression are inter-linked and one can not simply be

committed to one cause at the expense of all the others. There is also a sense that social action workers should carefully consider the groups with whom they are working and ensure that they are clear about how oppressive comments or actions are addressed. (Mullender and Ward 1993). Also the responsibility for challenging oppressive remarks should not only lie with members of the oppressed group.

2. *We believe all people have skills, experience and understanding that they can draw on to tackle the problems they face. Social action workers understand that people are experts in their own lives and we can use this as a starting point for our work.*

This principle challenges the fact that service-users are seen as the problem within mainstream social and community work practice. This principle challenges the notion that people's problems can be solved by professionals who know better, it recognises the fact that people are fully aware of their needs and an understanding of the roots of those needs and experiences will come to the surface through the process.

3. *All people have rights including the right to be heard, the right to define the issues facing them, and the right to take action on their own behalf. People also have the right to define themselves and not have negative labels imposed upon them.*

Once again this principle highlights the fact that within social and community services, the user rarely has choice in terms of the assistance that they are given. Mullender and Ward (1993:34) maintain that, "It is no longer tenable for workers to deprive clients of key information on the assumption that they know best". Mullender and Ward (1993:34) go on to suggest that service-users should not be given assistance based upon the assumptions of the professional, rather they should be, "empowered to opt in or out of groups and campaigns, to define their own issues and to set their own agenda for change."

4. *Injustice and oppression are complex issues rooted in social policy, the environment and the economy. Social Action workers understand people experience problems as individuals but these difficulties can be translated into common concerns.*

This principle emphasizes the most important aspect of the social action process: asking the question 'why?'. To encourage people to describe

their situations and ask them what can be done to change them merely scratches the surface and does not allow people to explore why their circumstances are such. Without this question, "there can be no awakening awareness either of wider scale oppression or of the possibility of moving beyond fatalism and self-pity into raised consciousness and the pursuit of rights". (Mullender and Ward 1993: 36)

5. *We understand that people working collectively can be powerful. People who lack power and influence to challenge injustice and oppression as individuals can gain it through working with other people in a similar position.*

The process of social action is ostensibly about group work. Groups that have used social action vary, but mainly they consist of people who come together to address an issue which affects them collectively. Arches (2001) examines the work undertaken by a group of young people living on an estate in Nottingham. They had been involved in burglaries and the courts suggested social enquiry reports on several young people in the area. The report found that the young people on the estate were bored and frustrated, with limited leisure facilities for them to use. The probation officer began using social action with the young people and over five years the young people raised funds, went on trips, held meetings with police and councillors, and enlisted support from adults on the estate. Although the youth club that they eventually created was destroyed by fire shortly after it was opened, Arches' (2001) research over 20 years later reflects the impact that social action had upon the young people involved in the project, particularly communication and interpersonal skills.

6. *Social action workers are not the leaders, but facilitators. Our job is to enable people to make decisions for themselves and take ownership of whatever outcome ensues. Everybody's contribution to this process is equally valid and it is vital that our job is not accorded privilege.*

Facilitation of a social action group is non-directional, workers are committed to ensuring that the group keeps control of both the agenda and the content and that the group itself decides upon direction and action based upon the work that they have undertaken together.

However, Arches (2001) maintains that this can be difficult and there are problems with the fact that once the involvement of the CSA is over, the group must not be left floundering. Many of her respondents spoke very favourably of social action facilitators and the fact that they did not try to lead or direct the projects. However training and support for the group in terms of how to continue once the involvement of the CSA came to an end, would have been of benefit.

The principles are an important feature of social action providing a firm value basis to guide social action workers. However, it could be argued that, as in the case of some of the criticisms of Freire discussed above, social action demands much of its workers who are expected not to influence the group, merely to facilitate the process. However there must always be the risk that facilitators will subconsciously attempt to move the group in ways that it may not necessarily want to go. Workers will have prejudices of their own, they will also have professional values and beliefs and it may be difficult to keep these buried during the course of their work. The next section will examine some of the other criticisms of Social Action including an exploration of some of the issues concerning the facilitators.

Critiques of Social Action

Social Action professes not to impose an agenda upon the groups and communities with whom it engages. However, Barry et al (1999:68-69) would challenge this and maintain that Social Action itself is indeed an imposed agenda and that it is:

“A method of working devised by professionals for groups of participants. It has not evolved through the efforts of those it purports to empower.”

It could be argued that any method which aims to work with oppressed or minority communities has an agenda. Mullender and Ward (1993) clearly state that the agenda of social action is to empower people through working collectively together to improve their situations or circumstances. Most importantly it asks people to examine the root causes of the problems they are facing in terms of economics, environment and structural inequalities. This is the aspect of the process that Barry (1996) and Barry et al (1999)

criticize most. They argue that in their experience young people do not want to examine the structural and political inequalities that impact upon their lives. They maintain that,

"For many disadvantaged young people, the problem is managing to survive day to day, finding a job and/or having constructive activities and support networks."

By this last quote, Barry et al (1999) seem to be arguing that as well as having to cope with the day to day stresses of their own lives they also need other activities and support structures that give them concrete day to day solutions to the every day problems they are experiencing. They argue that social action, which asks young people to uncover the roots of their disadvantage, is simply not giving the practical support and assistance that is needed.

In terms of their view of the perceived needs of young people, Barry et al (1999) have four main criticisms of social action with young people. The first is that young people generally do not want to address national or political issues – they want to focus upon themselves and their own realities rather than the wider structural picture. Secondly they prefer a more directive approach and rather than facilitation, they prefer emotional support from those who work with them. Thirdly, Barry et al (1999) suggest that social action can be accused of raising the expectations of young people in the long term. They go on to argue that goals should be short term and achievable rather than tackling issues that may not offer immediate results. Finally they argue that the self directive nature of social action may be too difficult and demanding for some young people, who after all, have been used predominantly to directive models of youth work practice.

One of the other criticisms that Barry (1996, 1999:69) makes is also the fact that self-directive group work can potentially overlook positive input from the facilitator. She argues that the facilitator role within social action is simply about guaranteeing anti-oppressive practice and the facilitation of self-direction. Rather she feels that:

"Those working with young people should also consider the possibility of injecting their own ideas into the debate with young people ... it could be about sharing with (them) innovative and pro-active ways of improving their situation."

She argues that there is also the issue of young people acting in isolation. As the self-directed group worker attempts not to impose content, the young people act alone and this, she maintains can be demoralizing and that it is only through partnership working that young people can really make a difference within their own lives:

“Without the goodwill, cooperation, openness and collaboration of others who can give them that trust and recognition as partners, then regrettably the powerful voice of young people may well remain unheard.” (Barry 1996:11)

Essentially, within her criticisms of social action, Barry et al (1999) is asserting that sometimes young people simply do not want to ask the question why, and that to take them through a process which makes them examine the political, social and economic roots of their problems is simply a way of imposing an overtly political agenda upon those who do not really want it. Rather they want a more directive approach that will support and encourage them to change their individual lives.

In a counter argument to Barry (1996;1999) Fleming et al (1999:49) maintain that the ‘why’ stage of the process is in fact the most important and that simply through looking and the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ is a traditional model of youth work that enables people to act, but does not empower them in any way. They maintain that traditional models of youth work use the what and the how and that simply to ask these to questions is to:

“collude with the a process in which explanations and responsibilities and the scope of the solutions are sought in the private world around young people and within their existing knowledge and experience.”

By not asking the question why, Fleming et al (1999) argue that young people are kept in their place. Young people are often told that they themselves are the problem and not asking the question why, reinforces this blame. The question ‘why’ offers young people a route out of this blame. Only by seeing the structures that oppress them are they able to, *“See opportunities to develop a much wider range of options for action and change”*. (Mullender and Ward 1993 in Fleming et al 1999:49)

Ward (2000) goes on to argue about some of the actual dangers of not asking the why question. A preoccupation with the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ in

the United States has led to what Murray (1999) terms a custodial democracy – a situation where mainstream society walls off the excluded either by sending them to prison or the deteriorating inner cities. The privileged mainstream remain comfortable and those excluded are told that they can not function as full citizens. Asking the question ‘why’ offers options that the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ do not present. These questions keep people in what Freire termed a state of naïve consciousness, they do not allow the exploration of the inequalities that prevent people from moving forward, they keep problems and issues within the realm of the personal and the local rather than asking people to be critical of the world in which they live and *“enabling (them) to envision a much wider range of options for action and change.”* (Ward 2000:5)

Barry’s other critique of social action (Barry 1996; Barry et al 1999) is the fact that Social Action was created within a repressed Third World society, where it was used to politicize and revolutionize the people. In this way, they argue that such a process is irrelevant for young people living in modern urban Britain. She argues that within repressed societies, such as countries in South America where Paulo Freire developed his approach, there is more of a need to take the kind of political action for liberation. Young people in Britain they argue, whilst oppressed and are not nearly so repressed as people in the Third World and therefore require different solutions based on what they need in the here and now.

Within Social Action literature, there are many examples of how communities and groups of young people have gained through working within this method. Whilst some of these examples are been given by people who are committed to Social Action, Arches (2001) provides a less predisposed evaluation of three projects and examines their impact over time. She interviewed people who had been involved with a social action project twenty years ago and asked them to talk about how the project and the social action work undertaken had changed their lives. It seems that from the interviews conducted the project participants had experienced changes within their relationships and behaviour that was having an impact upon their own families over two decades later. One of the participants in the evaluation spoke thus:

"I've got a 12 year old son now – and I know from what I went through to get this and that, I'm trying to show him values. If you work hard and try something you can achieve your aims ... I was part of something – I was part of making something work by sticking together and persevering – you can change peoples lives. I'm proud of that." (Arches 2001:14)

More specifically people in the evaluation group spoke about the fact that had it not been for the group they would probably have been jailed. Whilst there are many youth work projects that could boast about similar results, the social action evaluation reveals something more about the way that they were worked with and the values which emanated from it. One participant in Arches' research spoke of the facilitator in terms of the respect that he had had for the group. He also spoke of values and the fact that the group had remained in control: *"We were in charge, we set the guidelines, we wanted to get on it"*. (Arches 2001:16) A further quote demonstrates this yet more clearly:

"What the difference between ATAG (Ainsley Teenage Action Group) and a youth club ... well we wanted it! We wanted it we loved it."

Barry et al (1999) argue that the social action approach was created within a South American development context and therefore has little relevance for young people in Western 'developed' countries. However, as has been discussed above, the central tenets of Friere's pedagogy are pulled from European philosophies and theories of education. Yet, aside from this academic debate, Arches' research has shown that people who have used social action within a British context have not only gone on to use the process again but also say themselves that their interpersonal skills have improved and that their family lives and relationships are better as a result of the group with which they were involved twenty years ago.

Within his broad criticisms of social action Blackburn (2000) uses a similar critique to that of Barry (1996) and Barry et al (1999) in that he maintains that people who are used to a banking type of education do not have sufficient skills to be able to cross over into self directed work. This criticism would seem once again to be rather patronising in that it does not recognise that just because people do not have formal educational

qualifications, or who have been deemed 'socially excluded', they are automatically labelled as having limited skills. However it could be suggested that professionals who are used to individualizing problems and pathologising, find it yet more difficult to allow service-users to determine what their problems are, why they exist and how they can be remedied. The problem it seems lies not with the jump from banking to self-directed education, but with the professionals being faced with a challenge from those who they have perceived for so long as inadequate and in need of help. When people begin to determine their own destinies through a process that exposes and challenges the mainstream, the role of the professional and the power which accompanies it, becomes uncomfortably threatened.

In the previous chapter on consultancy, issues were raised concerning the role of the consultant and the extent to which they imposed their own agendas on the people with whom they work on an international context. Social action is a process that claims to address the power of the 'expert' and to hand over control to those who are normally deemed unable to take appropriate action for themselves. For a number of different reasons, people receiving consultancy in central and eastern Europe feel powerless. Their international status has diminished and their countries have been overrun with consultants who can often be patronising – lacking understanding and awareness of their cultures and languages, and offering them assistance that is based on western understandings of business and development.

To use social action within the context of eastern Europe would appear to be an antidote to some of the more oppressive and insensitive consultancy that has occurred in the region. The chief complaint of eastern Europeans has been ignorance of culture and social situation. Proponents of social action claim that the approach begins with the experience of people, starting with where they are at, and recognising that they are experts on their own lives and situations, and therefore best placed to make decisions that affect them. In this way, social action potentially holds the key to creating a solution to the problems that eastern Europeans have with Western consultants. If the principles of social action are applied alongside the process, participants should feel that they being guided through a process that will allow them to create change for themselves, rather having changes imposed or current

practice judged by consultants who make judgments based upon their own Western standards.

Previous chapters have examined the nature of the development process and consultancy to the post-communist region. One of the key themes that emerge is power on a number of different levels. This chapter has examined social action as an antidote to the power of the professional. Previous chapters have explored the nature of consultancy and the power of the West in the development process, dating back to the first missionaries and culminating in a global culture that perceives 'West as best'. The notion of power is integral to the development process and the next chapter will examine some of the major theories of power and how they relate to the post-communist situation.

Chapter 6 - Power

Previous chapters have examined the historical roots of development and child care in the Soviet Union, and continued to explore both the nature of consultancy to central and Eastern Europe, and the social action method that has been used in the programmes that are the focus of this research. In all of these chapters there are issues relating to power.

Development is about a relationship of power. Countries who have the resources, provide assistance to other nations who are perceived to be less 'developed'. Generally these nations receive economic assistance, except in emergency situations such as natural disasters, where more practical, immediate aid is required. When economic help has been proffered, there are conditions set down by international agencies that must be met if further aid is to be received. Also on a more local level, Chapter 2 has discussed the nature of methods that have been used with communities and presents the argument that in many cases, these also involve a power relationship because methods are imposed and open to manipulation or abuse. These methods have also been generally formed in Western development organisations or institutions and have been imposed on Third World countries.

The chapter concerned with consultancy examines the role of the individual in the development process and reveals that recipients of the consultation process feel undermined and insulted by international experts, who attempt to impose solutions on without any knowledge or understanding of the local situation.

Power, as this chapter will reveal, is not simply an overt position where some have more power than others, whether this position describes donor and recipient countries or consultants and local people. Chapter 3 considers the level to which ideology is a powerful tool that can be used to manipulate people and to reinforce control. Residential childcare in central and eastern Europe is an example of how ideology and its political manipulation manifests itself in lives of individuals.

The previous chapter on social action claims that it offers a process that hands over the power to the people it is attempting to assist, recognising

their knowledge and taking them through a process that asks them to question the power structures that hold them in their place and through this, to create change within their own communities.

This chapter will use theories of power to explore the situation in central and eastern Europe and some of the power issues that have manifested themselves within the first few chapters. It will begin by examining overt and less tangible international power configuration, it will continue with an exploration of the nature of power within both Western and communist societies, and will conclude with a discussion of how the individual is affected by both global and societal streams of power.

Eastern Europe, Power and the Global Level

Within a global capitalist society, economic power is crucial and it would seem appropriate to begin with Marx's theory of power that has economics at its root. Marx argued that within capitalist societies goods are produced collectively but that the profits made from these goods are appropriated by individuals. Exploitation and oppression occur because the producers are given remuneration far below the worth of what they produce. (Haralambos and Holborn 1994).

It seems ironic to use a Marxist analysis of power to analyse the situation in countries who have so recently rejected his philosophies, but his theories of economic domination and consumerism would appear to be reflected rather well within eastern Europe.

In the case of central and eastern Europe, the controllers of the means of production can be broadly split into two groups: multinational corporations and global economic powers such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The former represent the economic structures and networks that make up Western capitalism, and the latter the machine that creates the political situations within which they can flourish. When communism collapsed, the IMF and the World Bank began a process of restructuring the economies of Eastern Europe. Large loans were given out on the proviso that social spending was cut dramatically. (Deacon 1992) Full employment and the government subsidies that ensured its survival became defunct and the many people found themselves out of work and

experiencing poverty as a result of this. Economies were restructured in order that the region had the necessary structures in place through which to trade with the corporations that were eager to enter the new eastern European market as soon as possible.

Multi-national corporations quickly became free to trade, to build factories and to employ local people. Wages are much lower than in Western countries and therefore profits are maximised. As social spending was cut and as subsidised government factories became redundant, people therefore were desperate to be able to work for whatever they could earn. In this situation the multinationals had the power, and their control of the means of production to exploit desperate populations who needed to survive in a new world order that was alien to them. As Mullender and Ward (1992) argue, people who are trapped in deprived situations, live in a world where the day to day struggle to survive takes over their entire lives. They do not have the energy to act collectively, to change their situations, or to think about the oppressive structures that hold them in their place.

Economically then, capitalism has taken hold of the region and the various administrations have been adjusted in order that it continues to thrive. However, for capitalism to be able to sustain its stronghold, it needs consumers who have desires, who consent to the system and who are prepared to fulfil the roles and actions required in order that wealth will be continuously generated.

Central and eastern Europe provides the ideal backdrop through which we are able to observe this persuasion occurring. Perhaps the most obvious feature is that of consumerism. For years in the region, there were relatively few consumer goods available. Even basic staple foods were in short supply and queuing for several hours for bread or milk was part of a daily routine for people. (Drakulic 1996). After 1989, the region was flooded with consumer goods and advertisements extolling them. Westwood (2002:82) examines Marx's notion of 'Commodity Fetishism'. She argues that people who live within capitalist societies fill the market with a sense of reality that masks its oppressive nature. Consumerism is all embracing and everything becomes a commodity. Westwood (2002: 82) continues:

“Commodities become an expression of the self, and commodification, as a process, comes to embrace more and more aspects of social life, for example, tourism turns places into commodities, the body becomes commodified, and also sexuality.”

Bauman (1992) develops this argument further and argues that the power of consumption lies in the fact that people are seduced by commodities and that capitalism whilst being unequal, offers people objects of desire that they believe they have freely chosen, thus, “Consumers are not just duped by capitalism, they have an active role in the seduction”. (in Westwood 2002:83).

Consumerism seems to have two roles within a capitalist society. Firstly it creates wealth for the companies that have something to sell and secondly, through advertising campaigns we are told what we should have, not simply because we actually need it but because of what it will make us. Commodities are the embodiment of dreams and through commodities we are convinced that we will be better people. Commodities and consumerism contribute to our culture. Changes in fashions and other innovations fuel our desires to possess the goods which confirm that we have the ‘cool’ factor. New inventions launched ensure a continuation of consumerism as Westwood (2000) argues:

“Our desires are constantly recycled, reinvented and even invented in relation to new products, the endless pursuit of the new, which fuses the thrill of invention with the status awarded innovations and newness in most of the world.” (2002:82)

Until 1989, the people of Eastern Europe were actively discouraged from being consumers. Marxist/Leninist ideology was key to the reinforcement of communism, just as consumerism ensures the continuation of capitalism. The markets that opened up during the early 1990s must have been the ultimate dream of the marketing executives and the multinational companies. A new market that had been cut off from the global shopping mall, was now ripe to be inundated with products and goods that it had been denied for so long. People were curious about the West and wanted to have all the things that had been denied them for so long, so the multinationals and the marketing teams that sell their products lost no time in cashing in.

Adverts for consumer goods began to appear on the new cable television networks. In many central and eastern European countries there had been only one terrestrial channel, in the case of Romania, this had included long programmes involving Nicolae Ceausescu visiting various factories, deeply ideologised news programmes and the odd heavily censored black and white film. The new adverts must have seemed like the opportunity to look into a Utopia, which when compared with increasing poverty, power cuts and bleak surroundings must have made compulsive viewing.

Advertisements also contain images of a certain way of life and encourage people to aspire or consent to it. Nader et al (1997:18) suggest that for many, culture appears natural and inevitable and that it is deliberately made to appear so,

"by the manipulation of cultural images that articulate what people should be, should think, should buy."

In other words, as well as marketing a product and convincing people that they need it, advertisements also convey a message about what people should be. For example, in terms of adverts aimed at women, the messages are essentially about staying young and being beautiful or looking after home, children and husband. Eastern European lifestyles under communism had created a certain surface uniformity, where women were deemed the equals of men but still had to undertake the care of children, house and husband. They were asked to become asexual: make-up and overtly feminine clothes were discouraged in the work place. Advertisements for beauty products and convenience foods, at once allowing women to be sexual and freeing them from long hours in the kitchen, must have been convincing and attractive indeed.

The films and advertisements that we see daily through various different media involve the proliferation of popular culture, another tool that reinforces capitalism. Eagleton (1991:34) suggests that,

"The communications media are often felt to be a potent means by which a dominant ideology is disseminated."

Barber (1998) argues that it is specifically American popular culture that it is globally dominant and it is this that is being sold throughout the world,

through a huge image industry that is helping to create worldwide tastes through logos, advertising slogans and brand names. He maintains that this new cultural ideology is not coerced or forced on people, rather it bleeds into culture through film and advertising, linked to a world of consumer goods, encompassing entertainment and fashion. He uses the term McWorld to further demonstrate this theory and argues that it,

“represents an American push into the future ...pressing nations into one homogeneous global culture, one McWorld, tied together by communications, information, entertainment and commerce.” (1982:34)

Wertheim (2002) reinforces this argument powerfully, stating that,

“American fast food culture, pop music, films and television infect the cultural body of other nations...This pattern of viral replication repeats itself the world over, with American pop cultural norms choking out and stifling native flora and fauna.” (in Sardar and Wyn Davies 2002:117)

Not only is American popular culture invading other cultures it is also suffocating indigenous culture with a certainty that, *“their way of life is biggest, boldest and best”*. (Sardar and Wyn Davies 2002:104)

Gramsci's theory of hegemony casts further light on this process. Gramsci's theories were built upon Marxist notions of class inequality and social control. He maintained that there are various modes of social control which can be used by dominant groups within a society. Popular culture would fit into the category of consensual control which arises when,

“Individuals willingly or voluntarily assimilate the world view or hegemony of the dominant group.” (Ransome 1992:150)

Consensual control also exists in other areas of social life. Within central and eastern Europe, the Church has experienced a renaissance, with people returning in droves after having been banned or actively discouraged from attending. The power of the Church provides a useful example of consensual control and within the region it is relatively easy to uncover some of the reasons why people are returning in such numbers.

As has been suggested above, the people of central and eastern Europe and the CIS, lived within a culture where ideology was all-important. One set of

rules dictated their working life from the very day they began their nursery education. As Zinoviev (1985:282) states,

"Everyone (was) subjected to the influence of ideology from birth to death, systematically and with a striking pedantic consistency ... In nursery schools, institutes, universities, schools and colleges ...people (were) given specialised ideological teaching"

As part of this ideological teaching, women were deemed as being equal to men and were sent to work. However, within the home the situation was entirely different - communist administrations believed that sending women to work would automatically give them equal status, what they failed to address were the attitudes that would not drift away simply because women went into employment. What resulted was the triple burden of work, housework and children which made the lives of women very difficult indeed and once the old communist work ethic no longer existed, many women felt relieved.

The resurgence of the church gave women further permission to return to their 'traditional' roles, since its teachings espouse the notion of the conventional family, with wife and mother at home and the man as bread winner. Another possible explanation of the revival of the Church is the fact that because so many people had lived for so long amidst a structured set of beliefs, when that structure fell apart they have simply swapped structures. Also, within an atmosphere of such all encompassing change, the stability of the Church may well have seemed like something to cling to when everything in life had become so uncertain.

Religion is one of the elements of society through which power is exercised and people are controlled. The next section will examine some of the other institutions and structures that wield the same kind of control.

Power and the Societal Level

On a global level, as has been argued above, the power dynamic between eastern Europe and the wider capitalist world is often quite explicit. Consumerism can be seen clearly through goods and the billboards that advertise them and the 'West is best' discourse can be observed through the popularity of Western popular culture. However there are elements of

power within an international context that are less tangible. For while it is possible to examine some of the features of global power, and to acknowledge how multinational organisations maintain their power through consumerism, advertising and the promotion of popular culture, it is difficult indeed to analyse the root of this power, for it does not rest with one person or agency.

Historically, the notion of kingship ensured that power was far more easily defined, for monarchs had a divine right to rule. The ultimate power was God and kings and queens were destined by God to rule. In modern times, the roots of power are not so simple to pin down. Whilst individuals and organisations may possess a certain amount of influence, even the so-called most powerful man in the world, the President of the United States, is not ultimately personally responsible for reinforcing global capitalism. (Danaher 2000).

Foucault would also argue that definitions of power are clouded by too great an emphasis being placed upon the state. The networks to which he refers above include the state but also comprise,

“A whole series of networks that invest the body, sexuality, family, kinship, knowledge, technology and so forth.” (in Gordon 1980:4)

It is not possible in one chapter to examine all the elements of the networks of which Foucault speaks. Rather this section will offer some examples of the way in which power manifests itself and is reinforced in various ways within various institutions. It will also offer an analysis of how power on a global level filters down to the societal level and how dominant ideologies are observable within the structures and agencies which we connect with daily. Wherever possible this section will examine societal power with relation to central and eastern Europe. However many of the sociological and philosophical texts on power are Western in their origin. Sociological works on power emanating from Eastern Europe are heavily ideological, use Marx as a framework and are heavily biased on the side of communism and socialism.

The State

Foucault argues that too many analyses of power are focused on the state, and in an era where the flow of capital is all important and where multinational companies are constantly fighting to preserve their global wealth, his argument would seem to hold true today more than ever.

Giddens (1997:343) argues that many people in countries where modern democracies originate, are becoming further and further disillusioned with the state due to a recognition that global economic competition essentially renders the state impotent. He argues that multinational corporations can close down factories, for example in the UK, removing their business to another part of the world where cheaper labour forces maximise profits. National governments are powerless to act and the most that they can do is ensure that there are sufficient social safety nets to soften the blow.

As a result of the seeming powerlessness of government, people are losing faith in democracy. They feel that the government is a distant machine run by 'power brokers' in London and out of touch with local issues (Giddens 1997). . Sardar and Wyn Davies (2002) argue that the power of American multinationals and the power of the United States itself are responsible for the collapse of democracy and the reinforcement of global inequality which this has caused. Nation states, particularly those in Third World countries, are essentially controlled by organisations and multinational companies who have American interests at their core. Sardar and Wyn Davies (2002:74) argue that the US accumulates the world's wealth using eight different manipulations, ranging from control of international organisations such as the IMF and WTO, to "*denying control of their own economic destinies to over two thirds of the world's population*".

In Eastern Europe, the work of the IMF can be seen in clear relief. When communist administrations fell the IMF and World Bank stepped in with a series of wide sweeping structural adjustment policies aimed at ensuring that the countries of the region were able to engage in trade with the West. Deacon et al (1997:61) are critical of the 'tyranny' of the IMF and argue that:

“The requirement that to access loans, governments should open their country to free trade, reduce their public expenditure ... has been argued by many to be the cause of impoverishment, the further indebtedness of many countries, and the political exhaustion of potential opposition forces.”

The various national governments of the countries of the FSU and central and eastern Europe can not challenge international organisations if they want to continue receiving assistance. Loan conditions are enforced with ferocity and non-compliance could bring sanctions. Deacon (1997) concludes by recognising that the new nation states of the region are powerless in terms of the economic and social policy arguing that the actions of the IMF and World Bank activities in central Europe:

“Reveals the locus of politics and policy making is shifting from the overt national political forums, to exchanges of emails between human resource and other professionals inside the global economic organisations.”

Herz (2001:131) takes the argument down a level and examines the impotence of the politician. She argues that politicians are often unwilling to challenge the behaviour of the multi-nationals for fear of jeopardising their political futures. They recognise their inability to challenge what is occurring globally, occasionally make statements encouraging ethical policy, but these are rhetorical and rarely turned into legislation or political action.

Herz (2001:132) concludes her argument by using an example of the impotency of politicians. Edward MacMillan Scott (leader of the Conservatives in the European parliament) was asked how he would respond to the injustice of Shell's operations in Nigeria.

“He replied, “I’m going to stop putting Shell Petrol in my car”. Taking action as a consumer was, in his opinion, more effective than anything he could do as a politician.”

The arguments above reflect the notion that democracy and the power of the nation state, are largely influenced by the flow of global capitalism. Within its own territories, governments have certain power through which they are able to control their peoples. The criminal justice system and the police would be examples of coercive control, whereby those who offend the

values of society can be legitimately, *"Regarded as subject bodies upon which the disciplinary forces of society could be imposed"*. (Danaher et al 2000:59). However, once again there are signs that the global importance of wealth is reflected within the criminal justice system. Danaher et al (2000:61) goes on to argue that the majority of people in prisons are from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and that this is,

"Typical of a social system in which the economically advantaged are seen as normal and good, whilst the economically disadvantaged can be regarded as being abnormal or bad."

Foucault would maintain that there are many judges of normality actively engaged across different societal institutions and he terms this "dividing practices". The sick are divided from the healthy, the sane from the mad, the heterosexual from the homosexual and the lawful from the criminal (McNay 1994). We are continually being judged in terms of these identities in order that society can separate the 'normal' from the 'other'.

Foucault uses the modern penal system to develop this argument, maintaining that criminals are individualised and their psychology is scrutinised and judged based upon their deviation from 'normal' behaviour. Foucault continues with the notion that it is not just within the prison system that the behaviour of an individual is examined:

"The 'judges of normality' in the figures of the social worker, the teacher, the doctor, are everywhere assessing and diagnosing each individual according to a normalising set of assumptions... individuals are controlled by the power of the norm and this power is effective because it is relatively invisible." (McNay 1994:94)

Returning to the penal system, Foucault argues that disciplinary power is fundamental to the growth of the modern capitalist state and the thrust to create docile bodies with which to create a, *"submissive, productive, and trained source of labour"* (McNay 2004).

Education, social services, the health service and the criminal justice system are branches of the state and it is through them that this workforce can be nurtured, tamed and watched, for Foucault also maintains that in one mode or other, society is under permanent surveillance. This begins at school with tests and examinations, at work with organisational spaces, the prison system and the hospital. The latter are particularly intrusive with the spaces

being designed in order that the patient or prisoner is in a space where they can be watched or observed at all times. Security cameras, surveillance techniques and CCTV cameras are now part of modern life (Danaher 2000:54) to ensure that people are watched as never before and far more overtly than the hospital or the prison.

Surveillance was also an important aspect of Soviet rule and was used in order that the authorities could control people and find out where there were any party disloyalties or disagreements. The consequences of these could be very serious indeed. In some countries the authorities used rumour of surveillance in order to make people think twice about dissenting. In Romania for instance, the secret police let it be known that it could tap into any telephone call at any time in the entire country. The communications infrastructure of the country would have made this impossible. They also began rumours that one in every five people in Romania was an informer. Once again this was highly improbable but hearsay was enough for people to be continuously careful about anything they said to all but the most trusted friends and family.

Giddens (1997) argues that the constant surveillance of people in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union was one of the reasons why the system eventually failed. Detailed records were kept on people and so much time and resources were spent trying to keep a lid on dissent, that the regimes became economically inefficient:

“The whole society did come to resemble a gigantic prison, with all the discontents, conflicts and modes of opposition prisons generate – a system from which, in the end, the population broke free.”
(Giddens 1997:293)

A critique of Foucault’s theory of the power of surveillance is one which is highlighted by Dews (1987), who argues that he only examines the nature of the prison from the perspective of the institution and not from that of those who are subjected to the power. For within any prison system there are sub-cultures and customs that challenge the hierarchy and attempt to subvert the power of the system. Dews argues that Foucault over estimates the extent to which prisons are effective in terms of imposing disciplinary control.

Through Giddens' (1997) description of central and eastern European countries as, "gigantic prisons" one is able to observe the sub-cultures and the other ways in which people were able to challenge the system. Having lived in the region the researcher often observed how humour was deployed in this capacity. There were many jokes in circulation about the secret police for instance. Also 'getting one over' on the police and being able to laugh at their stupidity was another form of release. . Whilst people recognised that they were a very powerful group, humour was a tool that was used as a form of resistance. For as Foucault argues,

"Whenever domination is imposed, resistance will automatically arise. There are no relations of power without resistances; the latter are all the more effective because they are formed at the point where relations of power are exercised." (in McNay1994:101)

Resistance can be observed across many different levels of society. The recent Stop the War campaign, saw many people worldwide attempted to resist the global power of America and its entry with the UK into a war with Iraq. Demonstrations continue outside most of the summits and conferences of world trade organisations and are organised by professional lobbyists and public relations specialists.

Herz (2000) also talks about the stakeholder activist, individual investors who are using their status as shareholders to modify the unethical behaviour of corporations. Ethical investments have also increased from limited funds in the early 1980s to £2.8 billion today. The US Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility is a shareholder advocacy organisation with combined assets of \$110 billion. Members buy shares in companies and then use the power they have as shareholders to bring to account the more unjust practices of the companies of which they own shares. Herz continues:

"In this way 78 year old Sister Patricia Marshall of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament managed to get Anheuser Busch to drop several of its negative images of Native Americans from its advertising of Miller Beer in the USA. Other success have included getting PepsiCo to sell its bottling plant in Burma ... and 3M, America's third largest billboard company to phase out tobacco advertising."

Power and resistance go hand in hand and the events of 1989 in central and eastern Europe and the FSU, probably provide the best example of how ordinary people, protesting loudly and in many numbers were able to overthrow the power that had kept them quiet and oppressed for so many years.

Once communism has been successfully been eradicated, eastern Europeans were optimistic that the West would enter the region and would help to rebuild their economies. As argued earlier, this was not the case, and people quickly became disillusioned, not merely with the attitudes of the consultants, but also with the influx of American popular culture to the area. Suddenly people were coping with very different power structures, and as Mikkelsen (1995) has argued, within the development process there are ways of adjusting the power balance. Firstly, the data analysis will show that Ukrainians are not accepting Capitalism blindly, they are challenging the aspects of it that they fear will damage their children. Wilson and Donaldson (1995) cited earlier also note this strength of feeling. Mikkelsen (1995) also suggests that if those on the receiving end of the development process feel resentment at the way they are being treated, they can use sabotage as a way of fighting a process which they perceive to be unfair. Foucault's argument that there is not power without resistance, certainly rings true, then, regarding the situation in post-communist eastern Europe.

Hierarchy

Before examining some of the individualistic theories of power, it is first necessary to examine societal structure and the ways in which power is kept by the few over the many. Once again, on a societal level we find that those with the most financial resources have an improved quality of life. They have access to better health care and education. Giddens (1997:243) describes the notion of class as,

“a large scale grouping of people who share common economic resources, which strongly influence the type of lifestyle they are able to lead.”

Marx would define class as the extent to which people own or have control of the means of production, and within Western capitalism this group would

comprise industrialists, company executives and financial capitalists, such as bankers. The middle classes traditionally comprise professional people and white collar workers, and the working class, blue collar workers and those in manual trades or lower paid jobs within the service industries. (Giddens 1997). Recent class studies argue that as the rift between the richest and the poorest becomes wider, there is also an underclass of people who are unemployed, have poor literacy skills and who are at risk of becoming involved in crime.

As with global power and hierarchies, within a society such as Britain, those who are wealthy possess the power to become wealthier. Large public schools in the UK are shaping future industrialists, political leaders, bankers and lawyers, whilst the children and young people who come from working class families are being formed to enter the work place at a much lower level.

Illich (1973) maintained that there was a connection between the development of education and economic requirements for discipline and hierarchy. He argued that the school had four major roles,

"the provision of custodial care, the distribution of people among occupational roles, the learning of dominant values and the acquisition of socially approved skills and knowledge." (in Giddens 1997:416).

Paul Willis's study in the 1970's would seem to reinforce this notion. In his study he found that the culture of the school ensured that young people from working class backgrounds come to understand that they will not be able to attain academic successes and will therefore be unable ever to acquire high status jobs. Rather they are taught to accept their inferiority and automatically move into blue collar jobs with limited prospects.

Bowles and Gintis (1976) go further and argue that education exists, *"As a response to the economic needs of industrial capitalism"*. They go on to maintain that the structure and hierarchy of the school mirrors that of the work place, instilling respect and deference into a future work force.

A study by Reid et al (1991) shows that people who attended public schools dominate the higher positions within British society. 84% of judges, 70% of bank directors, and 49% of top civil servants had attended top public

schools. This would also seem to be the case politically. Within the last cabinet of John Major, out of 22 members, nineteen had been educated at fee paying schools and only one member of the cabinet had chosen to educate his own children in the state system.

Porter in Martin (1977:130) argues that because of the limited social experience of political leaders, they are unable to truly represent the interests of their constituents.

“If... a person’s beliefs are shaped by the social milieu to which he has been exposed, we can see the definitions of reality which provide the framework for making political decisions depends on the social background and life experiences of politicians. The predominance of some occupational groups and people of one class background means that limited perspectives are brought to bear on public issues.”

In this way simply through the education system, the capitalist status quo is being reinforced and maintained through the grooming of the elites and the workers of the next generation. If one is to attract foreign investment and to ensure that the multinational does not move its operations from the UK, a healthy, reliable workforce must always be in place. Initiatives such as the new Connexions Service and the work of the Children and Young People’s Unit, are both outcomes of government policy that aim to draw in all of those young people who are at risk of being long term unemployed and socially excluded.

On first inspection the notion of hierarchy in central and eastern Europe would seem to be completely different. Communism meant equality and as such, at first glance one would assume that there would be no system of elitism. However, when one examines the phenomenon of the Nomenclatura, a system of power and hierarchy comes to light that is very similar to class structures in the West.

Within the Soviet Historical Encyclopaedia and the Soviet Political Dictionary, there is no mention of the word Nomenclatura. Even where the term is mentioned it has a vague definition pertaining to a, “List of positions whose ranks are confirmed by a higher authority”. (Voslensky 1984). Voslensky maintains that this reveals that the party leadership wanted to disclose as little as possible about the group, for as Lenin (1963-70) argued,

"The division of society into classes must always be clearly born in mind as a fundamental fact of history."

Voslensky (1984) goes on to argue, that even Soviet literature admits that its society is split into two groups of people: the controllers and the controlled. Lenin's definition of class is no different to some of the definitions above. He describes classes as

"large groups of people differing from each other by the place that they occupy in a historically determined system of social production"

The nomenclatura fit this description perfectly and as Voslensky (1984:11) continues,

"Class plays the leading role in Soviet production and all other fields of social life, it is the ruling class, and the one by which all other classes are oppressed – this is the truth about socialist society."

Voslensky (1984) offers a portrayal of the nomenclaturist that seems similar to someone from a privileged class in the West. He has access to luxury food and alcohol from abroad, he is able to buy books that are not available to the rest of the population, he lives in a plush apartment and goes to work in a luxury office. Above all he has considerable power, he knows this and revels in it.

Voslensky (1984:72) argues that for the nomenclatura, power comes above everything. In capitalist societies, company executives often share their wealth with no one but are keen to share power with politicians, knowing that they will receive benefits from a mutually helpful relationships. For the nomenclatura it is different, they may be quite prepared to accept that someone earns more money than they do but they will never be allowed to disobey an order.

The societal status of the nomenclatura is very similar to the status of privileged classes in the West and it seems appropriate at this point to use the example of education to illustrate this.

After the October Revolution of 1917, the newly formed Communist Party announced that all children would receive the same education. However, by the end of the 1930s special schools had been established for the

nomenclatura of the Stalinist era who did not want their children to be educated with those from a more ordinary background. These schools were originally thinly disguised as training schools for artillery officers but soon after and up to the end of communism, they were simply known as special schools, where children were taught in foreign languages, and were seen as a training ground for the nomenclatura of the future.

Comparatively the educational situation for the children from ordinary families worsened and by World War II the system began to, *"Show signs of functioning more and more as an instrument of social stratification"*. (Nogee 1972: 330) Children living in rural areas were particularly disadvantaged. Only 80% who entered the first grade made it to the compulsory seventh. Nogee (1972) puts this down to poor rural standards of education and the fact that after certain grades children were forced to travel to towns and cities to continue their studies, with poor transport and very limited boarding facilities. He continues:

"The under-representation of the peasantry increased as one ascended the educational ladder. This was due to the operative effects of low social status which were not confined to the peasantry although it hit them with particular force." (Nogee 1972:331)

The same level of inequality existed within higher education. Certain universities were set aside for the children of the nomenclatura. They stayed in comfortable accommodation, ate well, received allowances that often equalled their teachers' salaries and spent long spells overseas on research trips. Other students lived in cramped hostels, ate basic foods, had very little money and could not even dream about spending time abroad. (Voslensky 1984:220).

The two systems of education would seem to be similar. Membership of the privileged class in both systems of Western and Soviet societies enabled access not simply to improved education, but enhanced lifestyles on every level. Within the capitalist system, wealth accords this privilege, but within the Soviet system, status was the key to improved standards of living. Just as there are mechanisms within capitalist societies that ensure the continuation of wealth and the acceptance of one's lot – so there were in the Soviet system, where even party ideology encouraged the class system and

the maintenance of the status quo. In one Soviet poem cited by Voslensky (1974) the two classes are compared to horses, with the nomenclatura as the thoroughbred and the rest of the population as the draft horse, "that brings the oats and takes away the dung." Voslensky (1974:181) continues:

"In other words, the Soviet citizen must not take the liberty of passing judgement on those people's way of life, but should content himself with fetching oats for the nomenclatura horse and removing its dung."

The previous section on the nature of global power argued that an important feature of a capitalist society, is the flow of money and the ability of multinational companies to continue accumulating wealth. The power of the wealthiest is reinforced through the media, consumerism and popular culture. Consensual control is achieved through creating a hegemony that people assent to and which they perceive to be desirable. On a societal level, the accumulation of wealth is as important and privileged people maintain this status quo through the maintenance of unequal systems such as education, within which children are either sent to schools where they are groomed for high privileged status in adult life, or are taught to be content with their lot within the state education system. Many working class people voted for Margaret Thatcher during her years as Prime Minister, the very people who would be hit hardest by her policies. This demonstrates that people consent to a social order that they are prepared to vote for, not because they think that it will benefit them, but because through media, education and popular culture, they think that it is right.

It is possible to observe this consent through the situation in the post communist region, both pre-1989 and post. In totalitarian societies, people consent to a form of social control because they have to, opposition comes with severe consequences. The new demands of capitalism see people in the region consenting in a different ways. In the first instance as has been argued earlier, people had enormous expectations of capitalism, they overthrew a political order that was deemed unsuccessful and the only alternative was to consent to the global capitalist world order. Immediately people were bombarded with the tools of control that are familiar to us in the West. Consumer goods, advertisements for them, Western soap operas, magazines and newspapers, and the messages they convey, quickly became

popular and after having very limited access to goods and media, the West must have seemed like a Utopia. People were drawn to all things Western, including the expertise of the consultant. Capitalism is often sold to people in terms of freedom. Freedom of speech and democracy, free enterprise are all part of the capitalist package, and freedom for people who have been controlled for so long must have seemed attractive, reinforcing the notion of 'West is Best' and the expertise of the consultant, the representative of the West. People in central and eastern Europe have signed up for capitalism. Having been sold the message of freedom, and not used to challenging political systems, they are accepting the superiority of the West and therefore the individual manifestation of it: the Consultant.

Power and the Individual

Having explored power on a global and societal level, it is now necessary to come right down to explore some of the theories that relate to power on the individual level.

Dahl (1957 in Lukes 1974) describes power thus:

"A has the power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that he would not otherwise do."

He goes on to argue that there is a difference between the capacity for power and the exercise of it. For power to be examined it must be observable and therefore he concludes that power can only be explained after a series of concrete decisions have been made.

This focus would seem rather individualised and basic, in the light of all that has been written above. The two dimensional view of power goes a little further. Barach and Baratz recognise that power is exercised in far more subtle ways and introduce the concept of influence whereby,

"A without resorting to a tacit or overt threat of deprivation, causes B to change his course of action." (in Lukes 1974:18)

B would comply in this sense because he recognises that A's request is reasonable and fits in with his own values. The underlying issue here is why B believes A's values to be reasonable. If one takes the above two sections and uses them to explore this question, it seems that B, has been

taken on a process of socialisation, media manipulation, education and political spin that ends with B being convinced that A is being reasonable.

Barach and Baratz recognise that there are indeed other forces of power at work, and term this a 'mobilisation of bias' which they define as,

"A set of values, beliefs, rituals and institutional procedures, 'rules of the game', that operate systematically and consistently to the benefit of certain persons and groups at the expense of others." (in Lukes 1974:17)

In this way we are able to see systems of power operating at the global level, filtering into the societal level so that they become observable on the individual level. International systems of beliefs constitute global capitalism and the accumulation of wealth of multinational organisations using consumerism and the media to maintain the status quo. On a societal level, government policies and institutions ensure that this is able to occur through policies that make the flow of capital easy, and which offer a workforce that is educated, trained and which perceives the status quo to be acceptable. An individual person acts according to the messages they have received that have their roots in the global level of power.

The research will reveal how this occurs. Take the individual trainer or participant on the courses which are the focus of this research. The Ukrainian participants have been socialised within a country that was once called a superpower, but which is now perceived globally as being only one step up from the Third World. They have been subjected to an ideology that began in their nursery schools and which continued through school and university into the work place. They have been part of a class system which was once overt, but never discussed. The trainers have been socialised within a democracy, they have been free to select their own political preferences, but have been subject to subtle indoctrination through information, the mass media, socialisation and education. They are now perceived globally as coming from the West which is controlled by American interests which declare that it has the monopoly on 'right, just and good. '(Herz 2001)

The situation in the training rooms, represents an microcosm of how power operates. It examines perceived notions of other cultures, and it explores

the extent to which power is a web of networks as Foucault has suggested. It examines the nature of resistance and how this occurs within a group and on an organisational and individual level, and it reflects the extent to which the global truly seeps into the individual psyche.

The Soviet life and the life of the Western individual would at first glance seem to be worlds away. Much however seems to be similar, for whether ideology is used or subtle manipulation and spin, Lukes' third dimension of power would seem to fit each culture rather well for the ultimate power is to:

*"Get another or others, to have the desires you want them to have, to secure their compliance by controlling their very desires."
(Lukes 1974:17)*

Chapter 7 - Methodology

Introduction

To begin the methodology section, it is first necessary to examine the nature of Ukraine as the field of research. There are some very specific features that have had an impact upon the data collection process, and these are addressed before the finer points of the methodology are discussed.

This chapter is divided into several sections. The first will examine some of the issues that have arisen through data collection within a post-communist, Eastern European field. The second section explores the paradigms, perspectives, strategies and methods that have been used or adopted. This will begin with some wider research arguments such as the positivist/humanist debate. The section on perspectives will examine theories concerning the social world. Pen ultimately, research strategies will be discussed and finally the actual methods that have been used will be presented. The next chapter will explore the ways in which the data was actually collected.

Conducting Research in Eastern Europe

For social research to be conducted within a country that is far from the experience of the researcher and within a context where the events that have occurred have had no precedent, the area of methodology becomes infinitely problematic.

This research seeks to evaluate a programme of training undertaken with researchers, social work practitioners and managers in Ukraine. The timetable for the training was set in advance, and different visits were arranged to take place at specific times over a period of one year in the first instance.

In order that the training could be observed and the first set of participants interviewed, the researcher entered the field without a carefully planned methodology. Whilst this was certainly not the ideal situation, there were certain advantages, and in hindsight it would seem that to have entered the field with limited understanding of the people involved, but with a rigid

methodological framework would certainly have been a mistake. Harvey (1992:8) argues that, "*Prescribing in advance how to collect the data inhibits the research endeavour*". In this way the researcher had an idea that methods would include open ended interview questions and focus groups, but wanted to experience the research field and the people involved before building up a more structured methodology.

The situation in Eastern Europe is a new phenomenon. The events of the last decade saw the end of the so-called communist experiment and there are no precedents. Never before has the world seen such a rejection of a political ideology, and never before have countries had to transform themselves so quickly into democratic, market-oriented economies. If precedents had been available, the research could have gleaned much from methodologies that had been used in similar situations. The context of the research would have been easier to set, the results could have been examined and the research methods duplicated, with all but a little tailoring to the specific context.

Hettne (1995) discusses the Eastern European phenomenon in terms of the experiences of the rest of the developing world. He states that today's development theory has evolved over a period of over a century and that the first Christian missionaries ideas of philanthropy and propagation of their faith have been allowed to develop out of a colonialist past into a recognised school of study that advocates empowerment and participation.

'Developing' countries have experienced many development methods. These have not necessarily been adopted by communities themselves, rather they have been imposed by Western governments or international NGOs. These have been tried and tested and consequently either accepted, rejected or modified to suit their context. In many ways Eastern Europe has been treated as a 'third world' country and there seems to have been little recognition of the very special circumstances of the region and the legacies of almost a century of communist rule.

It would be wrong to research the Eastern European situation in terms of the 'third world' as there are very many differences between the two. Barany and Volgyes (1999) use education as an example of this. They argue that in Eastern Europe the population is highly educated. Literacy is universal, and

technical and higher education is more extensive than in many Western European countries.

Also, unlike many 'third world' countries, the Eastern European post-communist states are highly industrialised and although many industries were subsidised by the government, there was and remains a skilled workforce both intellectually and technically.

As well as technical and cultural differences there are also other aspects that make Eastern Europe a special case. For many years people were forced to advocate the teachings of Lenin and Marx, and to protest in any way could mean a lengthy prison sentence or hard labour in one of the infamous Siberian labour camps. (Wedel 1998; Hoskings 1995) Associating with foreigners was outlawed in many Eastern European countries and this, alongside negative propaganda, gave rise to a distrust of Westerners.

Wedel (1999) states that this forced silence and isolation from the rest of the world caused many Eastern European people to be very private about their personal lives and beliefs. She states that people were extremely careful in terms of trusting others. During day to day routines they would be loyal party members, endorsing the correct ideologies and superficially agreeing with the latest political doctrine. In private however, with trusted friends and family they would be able to vent their real feelings.

Old habits die hard and Wedel (1999) goes on to state that in terms of the Western consultants that have conducted training in Eastern Europe, it is almost impossible to discover what their colleagues really think.

Hingley (1972) considers the Russian mind and arrives at similar conclusions. He also states that due to repression of feelings, Russian people communicate in a very different way to their Western neighbours. He refers to the tradition of keeping one's lips sealed, of not saying more than one knows and certainly not saying anything that could incriminate one at a later date.

There is some question as to the extent to which some of these habits still exist. One could certainly suggest that within ten years it would be impossible to transform one's entire psychological make-up after a lifetime of having to behave and think in a certain way.

There are obviously implications here for the research. Western consultants or researchers are treated as guests and at the end of training courses, participants are always enthusiastic about both the sessions that they have attended and the trainers themselves. However, in the light of the above, one can not know the extent to which the participants are voicing their true thoughts. One could suggest that this would be the same with a training course in the UK. However, there would seem to be some extra dimensions in terms of a training course in Ukraine, where the psychological make-up is so different. To take this concept one step further in terms of the methodology, there remain questions concerning the interviews and focus groups conducted - and the extent to which participants simply wanted to state what they felt the researcher wanted to hear.

It would seem that the above problems make matters rather complicated, not least because the research field is so many miles away. To conduct research within the UK would seem relatively simple in terms of accessibility, if interviews are cancelled they can be rearranged at a time to suit either party. If an interview in Ukraine is cancelled there are no second opportunities and therefore the pressure to organise meetings, interviews and observations within a very short time span is palpable.

Due to the problems discussed above, the methodology was not selected before entering the research field. Rather than impose a prescribed series of methods, the researcher became immersed in the field, had informal conversations with both participants and trainers and then created a methodology that seemed relevant to both the situation and the people involved.

Research Paradigms

As long as social science has existed as a discipline, certain arguments concerning the social world and how it can best be measured have existed. Sociologists first believed that society could be examined in the same way as a natural science. This involved treating people as specimens and observing the ways in which they would react in given situations. (May 1997) To follow this experimental approach to its logical conclusion, one would have to suggest that conducting such scientific testing demands that

laboratory conditions are in place and that the scientist will remain objective and detached from the work being undertaken.

May (1997) goes on to challenge the idea of social 'science' stating that human beings are part of the social world and that even if the scientist does his or her best to be objective, they will bring to the experiment their own particular biases, personal beliefs and value systems.

All human beings exist in a world that has been shaped by a variety of different factors. Family, education, culture and religion have all influenced people throughout their formative years and as such every person will have a different view of the world.

One could argue that there would seem to be no such thing as objectivity in social research, because each social experiment conducted will be prejudiced through the personal world view of the researcher.

The positivist view of the world remained relatively unchallenged until close to the end of the 20th century. Harvey (1992) maintains that even during the 1970s, social research in the UK emphasised the,

"Scientific collection of standardised, statistically analysable, objective data. Validity, reliability, and representativeness were the watchwords of this scientific approach."

Harvey goes on to state that researchers or interviewers saw themselves as objective information gatherers collecting data from compliant interviewees.

Gilbert (1993) suggests that positivism still dominates social science research and that respondents are still very much treated as 'beings' to be manipulated in order that valid data can be collected. Harvey (1993) discusses the use of the interview and concludes that positivist interviews are conducted as dispassionately as possible, only reassuring the interviewee in order that the data collected is objective. Too much rapport would only serve to jeopardise the objectivity of the information collected.

Positivist interpretations of research rely predominantly on the use of quantitative data and whilst this can uncover valuable statistics concerning social life, it does not reveal the underlying reasons why people act as they do. Qualitative research places emphasis on this very question. Research methods within qualitative social research rely predominantly upon

interviews and questionnaires allowing people to talk about their experiences of a given situation in a way that is intended to examine in detail their experiences and feelings about a set of given circumstances. It looks for a deeper insight into the lives of participants and is keen to uncover why they act in certain ways in given situations. Harvey (1992) maintains that during the 1970s, Anne Oakley's research (1971) concerning housework was an important milestone for qualitative methodology. Her work attempted to describe the nature of housework and to explain the housewives' attitude to it. The method she used was that of the in-depth interview. In presenting the research she provides extensive quotes from her participants and analysed them using the material she had collected to reinforce her argument.

Alongside the findings concerning housework, Oakley was also able to make some observations relating to the masculinity of scientific or positivist sociology which she maintains is an essentially 'male paradigm, "*concerned much more with objective detachment and hierarchy than individual concerns.*" (in Harvey 1990: 116)

For the purposes of this research a qualitative approach has been taken. The process of knowledge transfer occurs predominantly at an individual level and as such the experiences of those both sharing and receiving new ideas is a crucial element.

The notion of aid-giving, knowledge-sharing or consultancy to 'developing' countries is one that contains some challenging concepts. There are many issues of power and politics which are bound to impact upon the work. The researcher wanted the methodology to reflect these power structures, and the research finds that power is intrinsic to the process of development consultancy, not purely on an individual level but also within the different organisations involved and, in terms of the whole region they are reflected once again on an international level.

Eastern Europeans have been used to living and working within certain ideological frameworks which have attempted to dictate to them much of how they should live and work. Western European consultants, have experienced a democratic, capitalist, open society backdrop within which they have formed their opinions and lived their lives. A qualitative

approach has been used in order that some of these issues can be explored, in terms of the extent to which the values and beliefs of the two nationalities impact upon both training approaches and reception of them.

In terms of a global perspective, it is clear that the ruling powers of Western countries are determined to pull the countries of Eastern Europe into the capitalist fold in order that the global market has a new area with which to trade. The aid that poured in to the region during the 1990s came with many conditions that saw social spending being cut back dramatically in order that the old centrally planned economies could restructure themselves along market oriented lines. These power relationships both on international, organisational and individual levels deserve attention and it is with this in mind that certain research perspectives have been adopted.

Research Perspectives

Research perspectives offer different ways of viewing the world. Unlike paradigms which are broad schools of research, a perspective offers a particular way of seeing and understanding the social world. It is within this world view that the research places itself and in using this view attempts to explore the concepts that are uncovered.

Critical Social Research

Critical social theory comes out of a Marxist philosophy that maintains that power originates in economic production. Marx maintained that the organisation of society could best be explained by the division of those who engage and those who do not engage in physical production –

“Those who produce and those who consume a portion of what is produced even though they have not produced it” (Cuff et al 1998:17).

Marx argued that these relationships of power were reinforced by societal structures that aimed to maintain the status quo that was favourable to those with economic power. Cuff et al (1998:25) suggest that most societal institutions are arranged in order that the owning classes can preserve their favourable position. They state,

“(They) have an interest in the ways the family, health provision, education and training are organised in society, for these provide the preconditions for the continuation of its own position.”

However, in order that the balance of power remains constant, the workers must be sufficiently docile and co-operative within their roles. To this end, an ideology is created by the powerful in order that the powerless are to all intents and purposes – kept in their place.

Cuff et al (1998) explore the notion of ideology in relation to human selfishness. They argue that capitalist societies treat humans as though they are selfish ‘beings’ who are unrelentingly competitive and that it is a natural obsession for people to seek advantage over others. This is reinforced by the Darwinian concept of the selfish gene and the fact that it cannot be challenged or changed because it is within our very nature. In this way competitive capitalism is held up as the natural order. It cannot be changed because it is innate.

Critical social research aims to uncover and explore some of these taken for granted ideologies, attempting to go beneath accepted societal norms and to analyse the very nature of dominant power structures and ways in which they, and the ideologies they profess, can be challenged.

Harvey (1990) maintains that this is an important aspect of critical social theory, in that it is of little use simply to describe and analyse, if the system is to remain unchallenged and unchanged.

A critical social research model is concerned with deconstruction and reconstruction. In other words, positivistic research examines a particular phenomena as it stands: the circumstances within which those phenomena exist are taken for granted. Critical social research would examine the historical circumstances surrounding the phenomena and the ideologies that perpetuate the inequalities within which it exists. In terms of the development context, a positivist researcher might examine the extent to which aid works, to whom it is delivered and the degree to which it is successful.

Critical social research, on the other hand, would deconstruct the whole concept of development, examining the historical context within which it

exists and the structures that control it. It would then reconstruct the notion of aid giving through analysis of oppressive social structures. For example, the notion of development is of colonial origin, the details of which are defined by Western interpretations of what is developed and what is not.

The subsequent reconstruction would provide an analysis of the power relationships involved and would build up a portrait of the ways in which powerful international capitalist ideologies create a situation of inequality through dictating to those countries that are deemed 'under-developed'.

As well as deconstructing and reconstructing phenomena, Harvey (1990:20) also suggests that areas of social life cannot be examined in isolation and states that,

"elements have to be looked at in terms of their interrelations and how they relate to the social structure as a whole."

To use the development argument once again; aid can not simply be about one country or organisation giving assistance to another. Rather, there are a variety of oppressive global forces at work that should be examined in order that a full picture can be obtained.

As critical social theory relies predominantly on Marxist interpretations of the social world, it would seem that there are some obvious problems with using them within a culture that has rejected Marxist politics. There are, however, many arguments to suggest that Eastern European socialism was a far cry from the actual ideas that Marx conceived. Keller (1994) points out that it would be positively naïve to believe that Marxist theory is to blame for the fall of soviet communism he argues thus:

"blaming (its) failure on Marx is highly unwarranted, dishonest, misleading and ultimately philosophically indefensible."

He goes on to suggest that Marx actually argued in favour of a "*free society with a democratically empowered citizenry.*" (in Lincoln and Denzin 1994:140)

Harvey (1992) provides the examples of race, class, gender, disability and sexuality as attributes of groups that are particularly oppressed within a capitalist society. However this interpretation is entirely Western and does not consider dimensions of inequality in other cultures. For example, the

notion of race and racism in the region is entirely different to British definitions. In the UK black and Asian issues and those of asylum seekers and refugees are the groups which attract racism. In central and eastern Europe, gypsies and Roma experience a good deal of discrimination, alongside certain people from various ethnicities within the region.

The notion of class is also entirely different. In Eastern Europe class systems evolved as a result of the political system within which they were operating. Barany and Volgyes (1995) state that for people in post-communist countries, class was closely associated with allegiance to the communist party and those who had connections with high level bureaucrats or secret police were given access to privileges, elite jobs and travel.

Eastern Europeans accepted this as a way of life and in terms of the current situation relatively little has changed. Those who had privilege, money and access to material goods were able to use their positions in order to make more money once trade restrictions had been lifted.

It would seem that in post-communist countries, money dictates the class system to which one belongs and this is also attached to the status that was once held during the final years of communism. Politicians, and those party to high level decision making were aware of the situation and were more than able to ensure that they took care of their own interests before the end arrived.

There are also issues concerning gender in Eastern Europe and the extent to which they are different to Western definitions of feminism and gender equality. European feminism has been developed over many years and is now an umbrella term encompassing a wide variety of feminist stances that have been born out of a variety of different political perspectives. In Eastern Europe, under communist rule, it was the aim of the state to bring about gender equality. This was undertaken initially through encouraging women to work and offering them specific assistance in the form of generous maternity leave and free nursery places. However, in spite of the laws that supported women at work, the traditional role of women was overlooked and as well as working long days, it was still the role of the woman to take care of domestic tasks including looking after the children.

Watson (1993) states that in terms of the transition to market economy, women are facing more oppressions and yet feel that in several ways the burden has been lifted in that they are no longer under pressure to both go to work and look after their families. Watson goes on to refer to the process of transition as being the construction of a man's world and that,

"The domestication and marketing of women, and the de-grading of feminine identity is the inevitable corollary of the (transition) process." (1993:472)

If women want or need to work in central and eastern Europe, Molyneux (1994) states that there are fewer opportunities to do so. Unemployment is high and there are reports from many regions to suggest that women are less likely to be hired over men and more likely to be made redundant. In some cases there are reports of 'Men Only' advertisements.

The oppression experienced by women in Eastern Europe seem to be transforming themselves into the inequalities that Western women have long experienced as a result of global capitalism, which reinforces traditional roles and which also places women within poorly paid part-time jobs with few employment rights. Women are also seen as being more submissive as workers and less likely to become involved in trade union movements or rebellious activity. Also, since the collapse of communism, women are becoming more and more sexualised. The invasion of consumerism has brought with it advertisements for cosmetics extolling the virtues of youth and beauty, pornographic magazines and newspapers can be seen at most news stands and there has been a huge increase in the bars and clubs that offer adult entertainment.

Since the political upheavals in 1989, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have been recommending that Eastern European countries cut their social spending budgets considerably and an ILO report suggested that,

"Certain services ... might well be provided within the family instead of being offered on the labour market ... caring for children, ill or elderly family members." (in Molyneux 1994)

Just as such policies reinforce the traditional role of women, so the church, with its new found status in Eastern Europe, is encouraging women to return to the home. Right wing policy and Judeo-Christian values would seem to

be similar in that both are keen to reinstate women within their traditional roles. Molyneux (1994: 308) goes on to suggest that many people see themselves returning to an imaginary past, before communism, where there existed,

"a natural order when 'real' men and 'real' women occupied their proper place in the social order: women in the home and men in the public realm."

Those women who want to challenge the status quo in terms of gender equality have a difficult task. Feminism is closely related to socialism and women who identify as such are derided as old communists. Many women in public posts who would qualify as feminists often avoid doing so in order to maintain their credibility. (Molyneux 1994).

Where, then, is the place for critical social research within an Eastern European context? The definitions are so completely different that it would be impossible and arrogant to impose these values and research traditions upon post-communist countries, who have already been bombarded with quite enough in the form of Western economics, politics, media and culture. Harvey (1990:2) states that critical social research challenges the accepted norms and values of society. He explains thus:

"At the heart of critical social research is the idea that knowledge is structured by existing sets of social relations ... these social structures are seen by critical social researchers, in one way or another as oppressive structures."

Harvey (1990) focuses upon the oppressions of gender, race and class. These are all set very much within a Western context and yet the question remains that in a globalised world, there are very many oppressive structures that are imposed by international institutions and there are also norms that are rooted within a predominantly capitalist world order. Critical social research can begin to embrace global inequalities by questioning the power that some countries have over others and the self-imposed authority that many multi-national companies have on a global scale.

Within an Eastern European context there are many different oppressions, imposed internationally, of which people in the region are aware. Perhaps the most difficult of these to challenge is that of aid and development.

Always viewed as being 'a good thing', aid from one country to another is bound up inside complex relationships, with Western donors holding both the power and the capital. In this way the research will challenge some of the notions that maintain that aid can only ever be worthy.

Many of those interviewed during the research process have noted that they feel rather patronised by the aid that is given and are all too conscious of the conditions that are so often attached. One interviewee stated that much of the aid or consultancy delivered in Ukraine was for the most part useless, but to refuse it might mean upsetting the donor and preventing future assistance that could actually be of some real use.

This research aims to use critical social research in order to get beneath some of the notions that surround aid and development issues, it also aims to uncover some of the myths that maintain that aid can only ever be benevolent. As yet there has been limited material published that examines the very specific nature of aid to Eastern Europe. Critical social research is a research perspective that seeks to unwrap power structures and the nature of inequality. In this sense it does not restrict itself to Western oppressions, but is a relevant tool with which to uncover power structures within ideologies – and it is within this sense that it will provide the basis of this research.

Feminist Research

Although there have been criticisms voiced earlier concerning the use of critical social research in terms of gender, there are certain elements of Western feminist research perspectives that would seem to fit well with this research. Feminist methodologies challenge scientific notions of social science research and argue that, for the most part, it is conducted mainly by white heterosexual men and is over-concerned with objectivity.

Bernard (1973) states that there is a certain 'machismo' element in mainstream social research. and explains that this is,

"a creation of controlled realities which can be manipulated by social scientists who at the same time remain at a safe distance from what has happened." (in Stanley and Wise 1983:21).

She goes on to state that the research that is guided by hard realities is generally quantitative and has more prestige than qualitative or 'soft' data.

This research takes place in Ukraine, and as has already been stated, due to cultural, political and ideological differences, Ukrainian people see the world very differently to that of an English woman. It is therefore impossible to get inside the reality and understanding of people that are worlds away from the researcher's own experience. Objective research is difficult within any context, because these differences impact upon the entire research process. Stanley and Wise (1993:169) continue.

"Recently we were told that to reject objectivity, is only an excuse for 'sloppy' research. We turn this on its head and say that it is objectivity itself that is an excuse for sloppy work."

In other words, Stanley and Wise argue that for 'objective' male researchers to claim that they know the 'truth' about the situation of women is an untruth, for they have not experienced for themselves what it is to be a woman. In the same way, it would be unfair to attempt to understand the realities of Ukrainian people, whose lives and experiences one could not possibly understand.

Within the research process, researchers hold a position of considerable power and it is this power that feminist researchers seek to address. It maintains that research should not place the researcher at the top of the pyramid with the power to generate theories concerning lives and realities that she has simply dipped into through interviews and questionnaires. Rather, at the top of the research agenda, should be the vulnerability of the researcher and her ability to recognise the fact that treating people as research 'subjects' is morally unjustifiable (Stanley and Wise 1993).

Feminist research offers some useful theories around the collection of data with oppressed groups. Oppressive research practice does not limit itself to women, and whilst there exist sexist methodologies, there also exists other discriminatory research practices that exclude a variety of groups. During the last decade there has been much research conducted 'on' Eastern Europe that has been predominantly about management, business development and democracy, and one must certainly question the extent to which people in

post-communist countries have been given a voice within this and the change that has occurred as a result of it.

Through using critical approaches, the research aims to examine consultancy to Ukraine on several different levels. In the first instance it will examine the role of individuals. It will ask questions as to the values and beliefs that underpin the knowledge that is being generated or shared and will consider to what extent it is relevant for the Ukrainians who attended the training courses. In the same way, the research will examine the opinions of those in Ukraine who either participated in the programme or whose work role was affected by it.

On another level, the research will examine the idea of knowledge transfer as an international tool for development. It will attempt to uncover some of the ideologies that are imbedded within the practice of aid giving and the structures that exist that dictate both the methods that are used and the people at which it is aimed.

Research Strategies

The research strategy is a collection of methods based upon certain principles, and with certain aims. There were various strategies that were examined at the outset of this research and the conclusion was reached that to conduct social research, there cannot be one strategy that is able to cover all the nuances of human nature, language and experience.

In selecting a research strategy for this research, there were many issues that had to be taken into consideration. This section will begin with a discussion of some of the well-known strategies within social research and will explore some of the reasons why they were unsuitable.

The field where the data was being collected was overseas and this was obviously going to have some considerable impact upon the research strategy used. Methods needed to be flexible yet thorough and had to take differences of culture and language into consideration. The first trip to Ukraine was used in order to gain familiarity with the field, the Ukrainian participants and the type of training adopted.

On returning to the UK, various methodological strategies were examined and it became apparent that due to distance and language, there did not appear to be one single strategy that could be used. Grounded theory was considered but then rejected due to the amount of time that needs to be spent returning to the field to continually test out the data as it is collected. Pure grounded theory uses a methodical, systematic approach to the collection and analysis of data. In one respect, the use of grounded theory would seem to be rather scientific in that the structure of the strategy is rigid from the collection of data to its analysis and subsequent conclusions. This rigidity was key to the fact that pure grounded theory was not used.

However, there are elements of grounded theory that have been adopted. Rather than testing the hypothesis of the researcher, grounded theory uses people's experiences to build the theory. This research has attempted to evaluate peoples' experiences of the transfer of knowledge, and the conclusions are firmly grounded in the perceptions of these collected during interviews. Strauss and Corbin (1998:24) state, "*Research findings constitute a theoretical formulation of the reality under investigation.*"

It seemed that within the strategies themselves, there were methods and principles that were suitable. Selecting the most appropriate of these from the many research strategies available seemed to be the way forward. In terms of critical social theory ethics, the research did not set out to impose a given methodology upon the field, rather it attempted to tailor data collection methods to the people and phenomena that were being explored.

Participatory Action Research

Traditionally, participatory action research (PAR) is a development strategy that is grounded within the community and finds its roots within Freirean approaches to education that are based upon dialogue and problem-posing. Members of the community come together to reflect upon their situation, action is then taken based upon the initial dialogue and evaluation leads to further work being undertaken.

There are many methods and approaches that fall under the heading of PAR but it would seem appropriate to begin with an examination of the philosophies behind it.

Within the development context, participation gives emphasis to the decision making role of the community. Brohman (1996) argues that participation is a word that is used much but that is difficult to define. It could mean the role of the community within a specific project without any genuine influence, or it could mean an active process which aims to increase local control. Brohman (1996) concludes that the projects that describe themselves as being participative, will probably fall somewhere between the two.

Paul (1986:2) defines the ideal notion of participation in a similar way. He describes it as,

"An active process by which beneficiaries influence the direction and execution of a development project, with a view to enhancing their well being in terms of income, personal growth, self-reliance or other values they cherish."

In terms of participatory research, the above quote would seem to be the ideal, in that the community at the heart of the research, are involved at the outset. They are setting the parameters, collecting the data and then taking the action that emerges from the findings. Mikkelsen (1995) concludes that if participatory research is to be truly that, the researcher must renounce the right to define the nature of the problem, whose problem it is, how to solve it and why.

In terms of the data collection for this research, considerable effort has been made to ensure that the researcher does not assume a position of power. This has sometimes proved difficult as many people in Eastern Europe look to the West with certain preconceived ideas. At the beginning of the 1990s the people of post-communist Europe looked to the West for guidance and funding and the 'West is best' mentality was prevalent. After years of experiencing a system of government that was often oppressive, Western organisations and administrations were seen in many ways as being superior and experienced at the art of capitalism – the system that post-communist countries were told that they had now to embrace.

There are many different methods for data collection within PAR and some of them have been used during the course of this research. It would seem that with PAR, the methods recommended could be said to be no different

to ordinary qualitative research. However one could argue that the methods themselves are not as important as the ways in which they are used. For example, within qualitative research, the interviewer will prepare questions to take into the field. These questions will ordinarily be concerned with the particular interests of the researchers.

Within a PAR approach, and certainly within this research, the questions were formulated with those participating in the courses. Informal conversations gave rise to a number of different issues and these were then incorporated into the main interview schedule. In some cases, the interview questions were changed at the last minute through the suggestions of interviewees.

At all times during the data collection process, the researcher made great effort to respect and value the work that was under investigation. On one occasion when visiting a children's' home, the director was obviously embarrassed because of the under- resourced nature of his place of work. Reassurance was an important key to building trust and the researcher was very careful to be positive about the work of the home, whilst at the same time showing an understanding that the poor conditions were not as a result of a personal lack of enthusiasm or care.

On an individual level, a key concept of PAR is respect for those that are contributing to the research. Ukraine has been swamped by a series of consultants who have been disparaging of the conditions and wider culture of post-communist society (Gilbert 1998). People were obviously sensitive and defensive of their work and this was overcome through dialogue, not just concerning work but also through sociable conversations concerning family, home etc. . Mikkelsen (1995) also discusses the importance within PAR of examining the wider picture. Local change is important and individual change likewise. However, as a result of development input, there are likely to be changes occurring on a national and global scale. In terms of this research, Eastern Europe is a new phenomena and the ways in which the different post-communist states address issues of state child care will depend upon proven good practice within the area.

The research aims to explore some of these global issues in order that findings and subsequent analysis can be placed in context. An

understanding of global inequality is vital if that inequality is to be challenged. To concentrate purely on the changes that have occurred on a local level would be short sighted indeed. Ideologically driven decisions are made and action taken that will surely impact at local and individual levels.

There is another way in which the research would seem to embrace the ideals of PAR. Reinharz (1992:181) states that PAR does not simply have to be about direct action with communities, he believes that it can also be,

"A research process based on the notion that the acquisition of knowledge in under-researched areas can be a basis for change as it can challenge the status quo."

Social development in Eastern Europe is relatively unexplored and it is the goal of the research to generate knowledge which will challenge popular beliefs concerning aid and development in the post-communist regions.

Ethnography

The fact that the research is taking place within a different country and culture, indicates that there must surely be some knowledge of the Ukrainians who are involved with the programme. To this end there is a certain amount of ethnographic research within the methodology. Denscombe (1998: 70) states that,

"the ethnographer is generally concerned to find out how members of the group/culture being studied understand things, the meanings they attach to happenings and the way they perceive their realities."

For this research there is a need to understand some of the details concerning social, political, economic and cultural norms that will affect the ways in which people will respond to both the training courses and the interviews and focus groups conducted to explore their experiences and opinions.

To conduct research in isolation of some of the other factors that are an integral part of life for Ukrainians would be a immense oversight and would ensure that the eventual findings and recommendations would be entirely born out of a Western interpretation and therefore of little real use. Malinowski (1922 cited in Denscombe 1998: 70) explains thus;

“One of the conditions of ethnographic work certainly is that it should deal with the totality of all the cultural and psychological aspects of the community, for they are so interwoven that not one can be understood without taking into consideration all the others.”

The research, then aims to use a variety of different research methodologies and traditions. The situation of Eastern Europe is unique and as such it would be unfair to restrict the research to one particular method. It would have been impossible at the outset to select a methodology when the research field was unknown. Eventually research is concerned with people who engage in complex situations and attempt to draw meanings from them.

To use several different research strategies would on the surface seem to be a loose and imprecise way of conducting research, however one can argue that using a variety of research methodologies recognises the complexity of the human world and acknowledges that social situations and human emotions can not be easily categorised. A variety of different research tools, methods and theories will eventually converge into a more holistic understanding of the field that the researcher has entered.

Research Methods

The Case Study

Hamel et al (1993) state that the history of case study research can be traced back to the beginnings of modern anthropology and the work of Frederick Le Play in the late nineteenth century and Bronislaw Malinowski during World War II. Throughout his time spent in the Trobriand Islands, Malinowski studied the culture and people of the islands through participant observation, cataloguing every detail of events, behaviours and rituals of the people with whom he was living.

Le Play was interested in the prosperity and decline of societies and the transition from one state to the other. He studied working class village life in Northern Europe and through this work he became more and more convinced that the family unit was the core of society, and that if one could understand the family one could understand the society in which it lived. In other words he maintained that, *“family organisation determines societal organisation.”* (Hamel 1993:6). Le Play maintained that society could not

be examined as one entity, rather the focus must be on a specific element and,

"the element will serve as a prime observation point, one that makes up society's basic unit. This unit will reveal the characteristics of the society, its social state." (Hamel 1993:7)

During the last century the case study approach was developed by the Chicago School who used it to explore how people coped with urbanisation and immigration in Chicago during the 1930's. These studies aimed to examine individual experiences which provided a miniature replica of what was occurring within society.

Aid and development in the context of Eastern Europe has not been a specific topic of debate since the events of 1989. Discussion of these issues has been generally limited within the wider context of social policy, social cohesion and the role of globalisation as it is experienced in the post communist regions. Since the end of the socialist experiment, many organisations have entered Eastern Europe to work with a variety of vulnerable groups. These organisations vary in size from small church based charities to the largest international agencies such as UNICEF and the Save the Children Fund. Alongside these charitable groups, there has also been an inflow of consultants to the region, predominantly associated with business and management but also with the development of social services and it is this group and the process of knowledge transfer that is the concern of this research.

The organisations that are at the centre of the research (the Ukrainian Institute for Social Research, UNICEF and the Centre for Social Action) have different roles within the project. Alongside these different roles there are a set of different objectives that aim to create change on several levels: legislation has and will be introduced which could very well influence what occurs within other Eastern European states.

There are also issues on a wider international level that relate to the effectiveness of aid giving, in as much as there would seem to be more use in addressing inadequate legislation than simply attempting to temporarily correct a difficult social situation for individuals or communities.

The methodology for the research requires an in-depth examination of the nature of the work that has been undertaken by the participating organisations. There are many cultural and organisational perspectives involved and in order to explore some of the issues that have arisen, a case study approach would seem to be appropriate.

A case study approach provides the opportunity to examine the transfer of knowledge from a variety of angles and perspectives. Through the use of interviews, observations and documentary evidence the research will eventually provide a detailed study of the process of knowledge transfer through the experiences of those who have been involved at all levels.

The research asks how the knowledge transfer process works, what has changed as a result of it and why those changes have occurred. Yin (1994:6) suggests that these are precisely the questions that are inclined to lead to the use of case studies. He goes on to state that:

"This is because such questions deal with some of the operational links needing to be traced over a period of time rather than mere frequencies or incidence."

This would certainly seem to be the case for this research. Training courses in Ukraine have taken place over a period of two years, with different sets of changes expected to occur over that time span. The use of a case study approach is useful in that it can include all aspects of the process, issues that range from organisational difficulties to the implementation of change on the various different levels.

Yin (1994) goes on to argue that case studies are also useful when researching contemporary events over which the researcher has no control and which contain elements of real life.

The situation of aid and development in Eastern Europe has been documented mainly within comparisons of aid to the 'Third World' (Stephens and Kennan 1993) within international social policy debates (Deacon 1998) and in terms of management and business know-how training (Wedel 1999; Gilbert et al 1997;; Gilbert 1999)

The research sets out to evaluate the extent to which the social action approach has been successful in transferring social development know-how

to a different culture. Stake (1995: 96) suggests that all evaluations are in fact case studies which are, "*A search for merit and shortcoming in that case.*"

As has been stated above, the concept of evaluating the transfer of social development specifically to Eastern Europe is relatively new and as such it is important that a clear overview is presented and explained. The suitability of a case study approach for a relatively new phenomenon is reinforced by Bradshaw and Wallace (1991:155) who state,

"Case study research is especially valuable when investigating ... relatively less studied regions that do not fit Western-oriented theoretical perspectives."

If research concentrated too heavily on the English component or just one of the organisations involved, the full picture could not be offered and would therefore be of little use when making recommendations. If an entire slice of the project is examined, there is much more likelihood that the research will provide a more exact analysis of the workings of international collaborations that offer assistance to the people of the post-communist states. Bradshaw and Wallace (1991:161) go on to argue that the case study should be used if a well-developed theoretical basis does not exist. As stated earlier, the fact that there are few published works available concerning development within the East European context, would seem to indicate that the case study approach is one that can be used without difficulty.

Through a case study approach, the research will not simply examine the organisations involved with the process of international assistance, it will also examine some of the outside influences that impact upon the people and organisations involved. There are many aspects of culture, policy and international influence that will affect the current situation in the region and to ignore some of the wider issues would not serve to present an accurate account. Hamel (1993) maintains that the case study is an invaluable research tool through which a better understanding of society can be gained via the thorough in-depth study of one case.

Whilst there are many advantages for conducting a case study there are also some disadvantages. Firstly there does not seem to be a recognition of the

case study as a formal method. Secondly, there is the question of validity and the fact that case studies do not provide an adequate basis for scientific generalisation. Often the question is asked, “*How can you generalise from a single case?*” (Yin 1994)

The above argument would seem to suggest that it is only pieces of wide reaching research that can offer any societal explanations. To follow this line of argument to its natural conclusion, it would seem that critics of case study research would appear to be coming from rather a positivist standpoint, whereby numbers, statistics and subsequent results are the most important features of research.

A critical social research stance would argue that research can be as personal as one chooses. The experiences of all people are valid and to throw them aside with the suggestion that they cannot be corroborated without the aid of a thousand similar experiences would be tantamount to negating the experiences of many and ignoring what may be very important social phenomena. As Giddens (1997) suggests, it is all very well to demand several case studies when engaging in research, but how many should be included – two, ten, one hundred?

Individuals will receive and share knowledge differently due to a variety of different factors. However, alongside the very definite experiences of those people in the UNICEF/CSA projects the research will also throw up more general issues that are involved with the transferral of know-how across cultures.

In other words, it would seem that to examine the process of one piece of work enables the researcher to focus clearly upon one project in order that individual and community experiences can be examined, but that alongside this the wider issues which have come to light within the available literature can also be explored.

It would seem relevant here to mention one of the other arguments concerning the use of case studies: is it a method or an approach? Hamel (1993) would seem to concur with French sociologists, in that he suggests that the case study uses different methods and so is most certainly an approach to research rather than a method in itself. For the purposes of this

research, the case study will provide a framework through which to explore the nature of the work undertaken in Ukraine. Interviews, focus groups, observations and field notes have all provided valuable insights into the situation.

In short, the framework of a case study has been adopted because it has the potential to both explore the minutiae and the wider picture

Interviews

The literature concerning interviews for social research would appear to be rather technical. Silverman (1997) argues that researchers are encouraged to keep qualitative interviews strictly in check, not allowing the respondent to stray away from the exact subject under discussion. He also maintains that most of the guides towards interviewing are scientific in their approach and recommends that interviews should be concerned with,

"Maximising the flow of valid, reliable information while minimising distortions of what the respondent knows." (Gorden 1987 in Silverman 1997:113)

As a qualitative social researcher there are some dilemmas here in that the researcher has the power to decide what is valid and what is not, and if the research sets out to empower there are some serious contradictions: Does the researcher have the power to judge what is valid and then to cast aside the information that does not fit in with their expectations or hypotheses?

The interviews that have been conducted as a component of the methodology of this research have been semi-structured and informal. All of the information has been transcribed and all that the respondents have said will be explored seriously. None of the information that has been given will be overlooked during the analysis phase of the project.

The interviews that have been conducted were as informal as possible and often there were occasions where the interviewee was distracted from the point completely and spoke about an element of their lives, how they felt about international trainers/consultants, or how their lives had changed as a result of a transitional economy. When this occurred, they were encouraged to continue with their train of thought. Bryman (1988a:47 cited in May

1997: 112) maintains that what could be described as rambling is actually quite a useful tool in that it,

"reveals something about the interviewees' concerns ... (and shows a) concern for the perspective of those being interviewed."

The interviewees on these occasions confided personal information that they felt would be helpful to the research being conducted. To have interrupted them, or to have changed the subject abruptly would have been rude, and would certainly have gone against the principles of critical social research which are intended to empower.

It would seem that in many ways social research cannot completely throw off the legacy of science and although qualitative interviews are now regarded as a relevant methodology, the rules attached to conducting interviews are still wrapped up in scientific notions of validity and logic.

To date, the research has concentrated upon the participants of the training that has taken place over the period of one year. Interviews have been conducted with a representative sample of those who have experienced both the residential childcare, fostering programmes and the research methods training (See Overview of Programmes, page 16).

The first trip to Ukraine enabled the establishment of relationships with those who would eventually be interviewed. Initially, it was helpful to have very informal conversations with the participants during breaks in the training. Some of the issues raised in this context were written into interview questionnaires. In the light of some of the above discussions concerning post-soviet psychology, these informal conversations were of the utmost importance. Westerners are often not trusted and it was essential to break down some of these barriers before the interview process began.

Gilbert (1993) suggests that in terms of conducting interviews in the UK there are several ways of ensuring that the person being interviewed feels more able to talk frankly about their opinions and beliefs. He suggests that the interviewer should be as relaxed and as unselfconscious as possible in order to put the respondent at their ease, and that they should appear interested without appearing intrusive. In terms of the Ukrainian situation,

it would seem that this last point is particularly important as levels of trust may not be too high.

May (1997) states that the unstructured interview provides a qualitative depth by,

"allowing the interviewee to talk about the subject in terms of their own frames of reference ... drawing upon ideas and meanings with which they are familiar and provides a greater understanding of the subjects point of view." (1997:112)

Gilbert (1993: 138)) reinforces this argument and adds that interview questions should positively encourage,

"(the) underlying attitudes, beliefs, and values, rather than a glib or easy answer."

In terms of research which is taking place within a different cultural context, one could suggest that the unstructured interview is yet another way through which the interviewer can learn about crucial cultural aspects of the research, at the same time as data is being collected concerning a specific aspect of the training.

Some of the information collected would seem to have been irrelevant in relation to the training courses. However, they were completely relevant in terms of discovering some of the social aspects concerning life in Ukraine. Through some of the interviews, respondents openly discussed political systems, the economic climate in their country and their own family and social situations.

During some of the interviews conducted during the first phase of the training, it seemed relevant to conduct some interviews that were solely concerned with cultural information. These revealed much about the current situation in Ukraine and supplied a broader understanding of what people were experiencing during what is an unprecedented and unpredictable time.

Focus Groups

The accepted definition of a focus group can be best summarised in the word of Gibbs (1997:1) who describes the focus group as,

"(an) organised discussion with a selected group of individuals to gain information about their views and experiences of a topic."

Morgan (1996) goes further with his definition and states that the focus group should have three components. The first is the fact that focus groups are a research method devoted to data collection. Secondly the interaction within that group is the source of the data and thirdly, it acknowledges the researcher's active role in creating the discussion for data collection purposes. In the light of the above quote it would seem that the groups that were organised in Ukraine were not strictly focus groups, although some of the features can be compared.

In the first instances, the use of an interpreter made it difficult to conduct what could be called a traditional focus group. Questions were asked of the group, but due to the need for translation there were very many forced pauses and it was difficult to maintain an argument or even conversation. Respondents were able to comment on the thoughts of each other, but these exchanges did not constitute the core of the data collected. The responses gave some useful insights into the experiences of the participants but the actual interaction of the group was almost secondary.

The researcher can also gain important information through asking the group to compare their experiences and views rather than comparing individual interviews. (Morgan 1996). Once again this would seem to suggest that the group work conducted in Ukraine were not focus groups if the traditional definition of them is to be used. Denzin and Lincoln (1995) examine focus groups as they are used in qualitative research and suggest that many so-called focus groups are in fact group interviews. They argue that the focus group is a tool first used by marketing consultants in an attempt to discover public opinions about specific products.

They go on to suggest that the first focus groups conducted within social research (Meron, Fiske and Kendal 1956) had been conducted after much research had taken place, so they do not seem to have been devoted to data collection, rather a reinforcement of the investigations that had already occurred.

Denzin and Lincoln also maintain that within the traditional notion of a focus groups, the participants were selected very carefully. Some were simply well informed and others simply practised observers. The term 'focus group' seems to have developed over the years and currently within

qualitative research there are many variations on its theme. The groups used within this research, as explained above, would not come under the traditional definition, rather they are simply group interviews that have been a convenient way of collecting information using the people with the common experience of having been trained by British consultants.

There are both advantages and disadvantages to using focus groups or group interviews within a research methodology. Morgan (1996) suggests that it is the interaction between participants in a discussion that provides valuable data. He goes on to state that the nature of agreement and disagreement between participants is one of the unique strengths of the focus group. Gilbert (1993) argues on a practical level that group interviews are less time consuming and cheaper to conduct than individual interviews

Morgan (1996) does continue with a discussion concerning the negative aspects of the focus group and maintains that the most prominent drawback is the fact that the moderator's role in the discussion will impact upon the data. Agar and Macdonald (1995) conclude that the interviewer's role in the focus group will actually disrupt the interaction whilst individual interviews place the onus upon the interviewee to explain themselves more fully. This research did not find this the case, in fact, the groups seemed to bounce ideas off each other, they reminded each other of informal conversations they had had about some of the issues raised, and some valuable debates occurred during the sessions.

Using group interviews for cross-cultural research requires the assistance of an interpreter. Questions were asked of the group, which were then translated into Russian, the responses were translated back after every few sentences.

There were some difficulties here in terms of the flow of the group, in that the interaction was halted intermittently so that the researcher could understand the responses. In some cases participants lost the point of what they were attempting to say because of the continual interruption. However, some of the group members saw the interpretation pauses as a positive break in which they could gather their thoughts in order that their points were made as succinctly as possible.

The research uses group interviews in two different ways. The groups that were conducted during the initial stages of the research were used in order that concepts could be explored and questions could be considered. (Powell and Single 1996: Hoppe et al 1995)

Interview groups were also conducted in order that the maximum amount of people could be consulted within a very limited time scale. Due to financial constraints on the research, the first trips to Ukraine were undertaken whilst the training was taking place, and access to participants was restricted to lunch times and breaks. The use of group interviews enabled the researcher to talk to as many as twelve participants and this could be done relatively easily at the end of the days training.

There were some drawbacks in that participants were often tired at the end of the day and if interpreters were needed by the trainers to resolve problems that had arisen during the training, the group had to be either postponed or put back by up to an hour. However, the fact that the participants were willing to stay behind after a busy day's training, was testimony to the fact that they wanted their views recorded, and valued having a voice within the research. Many had second jobs they had to go to, responsibilities within their children's homes or family commitments, but the numbers were always strong and the discussions lively.

Interview groups were also used in order to collect cultural data so that the research could be placed in the cultural and social context of Ukraine. Groups were asked to discuss a variety of topics relating to their lives, including family, work and positive and negative aspects of life in Ukraine. As well as conducting this research, the researcher was also working for other agencies in Ukraine, and she asked colleagues within this work to take part in similar groups, so as to gain as wide an understanding as possible of some of the current cultural, social and political issues in Ukraine. These included issues such as film and television and the effects of Western influence on young people. The data collected during these focus groups enabled the researcher to become acquainted with some of the values and beliefs that are important to many Ukrainians at the current time, and also to explore some of the issues that could have an effect on the process of knowledge transfer. As Sarantakos (1993: 267) states:

"Ethnographic research is holistic in that it attempts to understand social structures ... in terms of references to the whole socio-cultural system, and in that it assigns meanings to parts of the system by connecting them to a whole."

Language and Interpretation

The most significant difficulty with collecting data in a different country is that of language, and during the initial visits, the fact that many of the meetings, interviews and appointments that took place, were completely reliant upon the presence of an interpreter. Unfortunately, as Jentsch (1998) points out, there is sparse literature that explores the effect of the interpreter upon the data collected.

There are two distinguishable types of interpreter, the lay interpreter and the professional interpreter (Jentsch 1998). All of the interpreters employed to conduct both the individual and group interviews were within the former category, all but one were students of English.

Jentsch (1998) states that through the use of interpreters there are several potential contributors to bias: background characteristics, psychological, and behavioural factors. She explains thus,

"(these factors) operate within the individual, determining his or her behaviour during the interview, as well as between the two interview participants." (1998: 278)

In terms of background characteristics, the age, gender, education, socio-economic status and race, can all impact upon the interview and the data collected. These factors can make the interviewee feel comfortable or intimidated. Psychological factors would include the interpreter's perceptions, attitudes, expectations and motives.

One of the interpreters used for an interview was a social work student who had an enthusiastic interest in the interview topic. She knew the terms being used and about the general situation (which in this case was about children in state care) and was able to provide further information concerning the situation of these children.

Alternatively, another interpreter who could be classed as more of a professional, in that interpreting was part of his full time job, was not involved in social work and was often very critical of social workers and

their profession. Although both of these interpreters spoke the same language and were asked to translate similar information, the question remains as to the extent their beliefs and attitudes impacted upon the language they used.

Temple (1997) insists that the interpreter has a dual role, in that as well as translating they also provide a valuable perspective. Her work based within the Polish community, enabled her to consider the relationship that the researcher has with others involved in the interview process, namely the interpreter.

She argues that the interpreter should be familiar with the intellectual autobiography of the researcher and vice versa. Stanley (1990:62) explains the above concept as,

"An analytical concern with the specifics of how we come to understand what we do, by locating acts of understanding in an explication of the grounded contexts these are located in and arrive from"

In other words, the researcher is influenced by what she knows and what she knows and experiences influences what she writes. Extending this to the researcher/interpreter debate, Temple maintains that the interpreter is a crucial player within the research and attempting to understand their intellectual biographies, by talking to them about their perspectives and insights, is a productive methodological exercise.

Temple goes on to give an example based on her experiences interviewing Polish women with an interpreter. She states that through discussions with the interpreter about each other's perspectives and differences in understanding, she was able to ground her research on a much deeper cultural level. She states,

"Researchers using translators have to become involved in these conversations, otherwise all we have is a form of cultural tourism where researchers are involved in all limited interactions as tourists who return home, if they ever went at all, not having engaged with the culture they are researching, even at the level of discussion with translators." (1997:616)

The concept of interpreting is also problematic when it comes to transcribing the material. Occasionally, during the transcription process,

there were words and sentences that contained poor grammar, in some cases making the statement difficult to understand. On occasions the interpreter was asked to repeat what s/he had said, and on other occasions this would have been difficult. These were not professional interpreters, and had I asked constantly for them to repeat or to translate in a different way, I would have succeeded only in undermining their confidence and making them look incompetent in front of the rest of the group. When transcribing the interviews, the researcher used colleagues to listen to sentences that were difficult to understand, and more often than not we were able to work out what was being said. If the interpreter was unsure about the language or words used, she did not use this in the eventual data analysis, as mere guesses could not be faithful to the ideas of the participant.

After the first two trips to Ukraine, the researcher had built up a small data base of a number of interpreters and was able to select the most appropriate for any given piece of work. For example, one of the interpreters was extremely effective during one to one interviews, but became less confident in the rather more public atmosphere of a group interview.

Field Notes and Observations

During the first trips to Ukraine, the training was observed by the researcher. Although, due to language difficulties, the observations could not be participative, the observation notes taken provided some interesting insights into the social action process and the ways in which the participants responded to it.

May (1997) states that it is impossible to take notes on anything and everything that happens, rather the research will be guided by the theoretical interests of the researcher. Initially, with little experience of observation, the researcher attempted to note everything that occurred during the training sessions. However over a period of time, the notes became more specific and the researcher was able to concentrate upon particular observations that were highlighted through analytical notes and thoughts.

During the process of the training it was also possible to have informal conversations with participants. These were extremely useful, in that as an evaluator and researcher, people felt comfortable in making criticisms of the

approach and also discussed some of the wider issues concerning funding and organisational difficulties which could have an impact upon the outcomes of the training. These conversations were written up within the field notes and as well as providing a general picture of people's thoughts, they also helped when structuring the informal interview schedules.

The Process of Data Collection

The actual process of data collection took place in both the UK and in Ukraine. There were a fixed number of people involved with the training courses and all the participants were given the opportunity to be interviewed, as were the British trainers.

The first visit to Ukraine provided an overview of the courses that were taking place and allowed the researcher to have informal conversations with both participants and British trainers. Training sessions were observed and field notes were taken both concerning the research and social, cultural and political life in Ukraine.

The first trip was one of orientation and was used to build up a general picture of how the training was shaping. Some tentative informal interviews were conducted, and the issues that were raised were then incorporated into the formal interview schedule, which was drawn up between the first and the second visits to the field

The first in-depth interviews were conducted on the second trip to Ukraine with those participating on both fostering and adoption and residential child care courses. These interviews used the services of an interpreter. There were a few limitations during this particular trip, in that there was insufficient time to conduct some of the interviews in adequate depth. Training courses were run all day, and people were asked to either offer their time during lunch breaks or at the end of the day.

All the interviews were based upon the same format. At the beginning, effort was made to ensure that participants were relaxed. They were asked about their work and their general impressions of the course in the first instance in order to build up confidence before the main interview schedule (see appendix 1) was used. Alongside the formal interviews, informal

conversations were also undertaken with participants and the contents of these were written up within the field notes.

In some cases, interviewees broke away from the interview questionnaire. This was not discouraged and some valuable information concerning social and cultural life was gained in this way. When participants discovered that the interviews would be confidential they were more forthcoming about providing data, and it seemed that many people had to be reassured on a number of occasions concerning issues of confidentiality.

Conducting interviews during the training courses was invaluable as this yielded some vital material concerning the very first impressions of the nature of social action training. When interviewed at the end of the course, the comments were different and were concerned with their learning process and the ways in which social action takes people through such a sequence.

The interviews themselves lasted upwards of half an hour, with the longest taking an hour to conduct. The role of the interpreter was essential during the process and there were a variety of interpreters used with varying degrees of English language knowledge.

Figure 1 - Table of Interviews

Total Participants in the UK	Total: 14
Trainers on the Social Action/UNICEF/ISR Programmes	8
Representatives from other organisations working in Ukraine	4
Management	2

Total Participants in Ukraine	Total: 68
Participants in training	42
Staff in children's homes who did not participate in training	5
Children living in Residential Care	9
Management	2
Social Life and Culture	10

Validity and Reliability

This research has examined a particular programme of training in Ukraine, and therefore there were only ever a set number of people who could participate in terms of interviews, focus groups and observation. The objective of the research was to discover how a particular training process worked within a cross-cultural framework, and also within a specific area of services.

The concepts of validity and reliability of research projects reveals the positivist roots of social research. Sarantakos (1993) argues that quantitative research uses methods to control the research environment and create artificial situations and seek to measure that which is difficult to gauge. Qualitative research recognises different techniques to ensure reliability and it is these that the research has sought to incorporate.

Validity and reliability are often confused and it seems appropriate here to examine some definitions. Whilst weighing scales may be reliable, in that they offer the same reading when an object of the same weight is placed upon them, their measurement may not be valid because the actual reading may be incorrect. When placed on another set of scales the reading may be different. In terms of conducting research of a more scientific nature, validity and reliability are much easier to test. Thousands of experiments can be undertaken within a controlled environment, if the result is the same each time, reliability and validity can be easily argued. The social researcher is not able to control the social environment, and if attempts were made to change it, the research is attempting to examine something that is false because the environment has been tampered with.

Qualitative social research sets out to explore situations that involve people. It seeks to find explanations, based upon the thoughts and feelings of people involved. People are complex and to place them in the same laboratory situation and to expect everybody to say the same thing under the right conditions is obviously nonsense, because all people will think differently due to their own personal socialisation, culture, family background and education. Mills (1973) in Harvey (1990:50) suggests that classic sociology is about attempting to, *"Improve the chances that our guesses about important matters might be right."* This statement recognises that the analysis of qualitative research data is a personal matter, and whilst consistent levels of coding and categorising can be applied, the beliefs, biases and interests of the researcher will very much form part of the analysis.

Dey (1993:255) also recognises this to be the case in that researchers will understand data differently based upon their personal experiences and perspectives. He argues that validity occurs when one is close to the data, and that the conclusions drawn are firmly grounded within that data, using coding and categorisation to make connection. He continues:

"Other interpretations of the data may be possible, but at least we can be confident that the concepts and connections we have used are rooted in the data we have analysed."

Sarantakos (1993) suggests that there are researchers who have suggested other ways to ensure the quality of the research other than reliability. He particularly cites Bogumil and Immerfall (1985) who propose that rather than talking of reliability researchers should examine other elements.

“coherence, that is the extent to which methods meet the goals (of the research); openness, the degree to which otherwise suitable methods are allowed to be used; discourse, that is the extent to which researchers are allowed to discuss the researched data, and interpret them together and evaluate the consequences of such findings.”

Within this research there are elements of all of the above. In terms of coherence, the methods that were used suited the research field. Semi-structured interviews allowed participants and trainers to openly discuss how they felt about the training courses and subsequent changes; focus groups allowed open discussion to take place amongst participants. Field notes were made throughout the process and these often clarified the information given in the interviews and groups. They were also an important tool in terms of observations of the training courses and the physical dimensions including body language and other non verbal communication.

Regarding openness, the research did not rely upon one fixed method for either data collection or analysis. The researcher undertook informal discussions with participants and trainers and also with the children from the institutions that had committed themselves to change. The interviews were also conducted in a way that was flexible, and interviewees were free to explore their chain of thought, even though it was sometimes not relevant to the actual question asked. Cain and Finch (1991) in Silverman (1993) also argue that a range of methods can help to deepen understanding of a particular issue. Silverman (1993) also argues that triangulation, or use of different methods, is a way of situating accounts rather than simply allowing one account to ‘undercut the other’.

Discourse was an important element of the research and the researcher was able to discuss the findings openly with her supervision team. Interim evaluations were also submitted to all the parties involved and these were discussed openly as part of the training teams debrief and preparation

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An explanation of the social world cannot judge the validity of that world, rather it seeks to uncover some of the experiences of the people that are involved with it. The training courses were conducted on several days over a period of one year with exactly the same people. However, each participant in this research, Ukrainians and British, would have experienced the courses differently. On one level the research seeks to explain why this is so, and to discover the extent to which cross cultural training can be received and used effectively by those participating.

Kirk and Miller (1986) suggests that in assessing the validity of qualitative research, the terms, "*Robustness, generality of scope and replicability*" are important. For critical social research, the issue is not the validity of the data, rather it is concerned with the ways in which people have responded to a specific phenomenon and why they have responded in those ways. The depth of the research, its scope and its resonance are the keys to its success. Methodical, intense data collection, through a process that could easily be repeated ensure that the research is 'valid' in a critical human sense.

The critical social research foundation to this research attempts to ensure that disadvantaged or oppressed groups are empowered through the research process. Lincoln and Denzin (1994) agree and argue for a 'politics of liberation' within qualitative social research. They continue:

"A politics of liberation must always begin with the perspectives, desires and dreams of all the individuals and groups who have been oppressed by the larger ideological, economic and political forces of a society or a historical moment." (in Seale, C 1999)

In terms of central and eastern Europe the above quote certainly rings true. The people of the region were catapulted suddenly into a world of capitalism and market forces. Social spending was cut and subsidies taken away and subsequently people were experiencing extreme poverty. The data will show that people are feeling somewhat let down by the West. When communism fell certain oppressions that were present under communism were merely exchanged for those with which we are familiar with in the West. This research has attempted to examine some of the dreams and ideas of groups and individuals and has also endeavoured to

challenge some of the oppressions that have become exposed during the development and consultancy process.

Coding and Categorising

When the data collection process is over, there is an enormous amount of material to sort out and work through. The process of coding and categorising is simply the way through which the researcher breaks down the data and organises it in order that it can be analysed. The coding of quantitative data involves counting the responses and through the eventual numbers, offering an interpretation based upon how many people have responded in a particular way to a question. Qualitative data involves reading transcripts, field notes and observations and then making sense of the information. The researcher needs to go through a tight process in order to analyse the data and to draw conclusions from what has been heard and noted. Below is an over view of this process, followed by some concrete conclusions as to how the data was analysed and conclusions drawn.

Overview of the Coding Process

1. **In vivo coding** – the process began with submersion in the data, reading it a number of times and then noting down words or phrases verbatim) – the researcher wanted to offer a true representation of what people had said, and as such wrote down the actual words and phrases that they themselves had used.
2. **Themes emerging from in vivo coding** –once the in vivo coding had been completed, the researcher then began to place these into categories, some examples of these were fostering and adoption, organisations, family, language and interpretation, trainers, expectations, preparation, stereotypes.
3. **Codes** – all of the different categories were then given a code – for example where a statement concerning language and interpretation was found within an interview the phrase would be marked (see table 2 below) these were placed on file cards and then transferred onto the computer- they were also marked on the text so that they were easily traceable back to the file cards and vice versa.

4. **Filing** - Once all the file cards had been completed they were sorted into broader categories Expectation, preparation, training, and change – all of the smaller categories fitted neatly into one of the above.
5. **Analyses of British and Ukrainian data** was undertaken separately but with a comparison at the end. For examples – comparisons of expectations – and within that an expression of stereotypes of the West and Eastern Europe respectively.
6. **Similarities and differences** between Ukrainians and British were examined.
7. **Analysis** – within the categories there were issues arising on several different levels. On an international level there are issues concerning the global status of central and eastern Europe, these were reflected within an organisational level and both were observable with individual people. Overwhelmingly, many of the issues raised within the analysis were related to power on all three different levels. The over-arching categories of Expectation, Preparation, Training and Change, all contained elements of power and power struggles between trainers and participants (individual), indigenous organisations (organisational) and international agencies and Western Europe and Eastern Europe (international level).

It was important for the research not simply to address the process of the training itself. Within an international context the researcher felt that there were vital cultural issues that deserved attention. She felt that simply conducting an evaluation of the process of knowledge generation in isolation of cultural factors would have been a pointless task. All of those involved in the course were interviewed or were involved in a focus group. Some of the questions within the schedule were around elements of culture and lifestyle in Ukraine and about perceptions and views concerning Western involvement. The responses to these enabled the researcher to place views about the courses within a cultural context. This 'cultural triangulation' was valuable and often permitted the researcher to check out what may have been unusual views about the training, and which at their root were motivated by cultural experience.

Also in terms of cultural triangulation, the researcher carried a note book with her during all the time spent in-country. Discussions with shopkeepers, taxi drivers and other members of the public were recorded in order that the researcher took every possibility to understand social life in Ukraine.

The process of data analysis began by immersion in the data. The researcher considered employing someone to transcribe the data, but on reflection decided that the act of transcribing would be an opportunity to get close to the information collected. Whilst transcribing the researcher was able to completely refamiliarise herself with the data and to make notes of issues which sprang to mind when she was reminded of the interview conducted.

Having transcribed the interviews the researcher read and re-read all of the interviews conducted and made notes on some of the themes and issues that seemed to be emerging. She also read through the field notes and observations of training courses and in the same way made notes upon general themes. Dey (1993:83) quotes Edmund Burke who stated that, *"To read without reflecting is like eating without digesting,"* and in this way the researcher read the data closely and was careful to note down her reflections. Dey (1983:83) continues:

"We cannot analyse our data until we read it. How well we read it may determine how well we analyse it...The aim of reading through our data prepares the ground for analysis."

Having read and re-read the data, it then needs to be broken down into categories in order for the process of analysis to begin. Minichiello et al (1990:293) describe a coding system as a, *"means of reorganising the data according to the conceptual themes recognised by the researcher."* They continue by suggesting that codes can be generated through either the information given by participants, research questions and theoretical frameworks. The researcher opted to code according to the interview transcripts in order that the research would stay as faithful as possible to the responses of the participants. Also in order that the research was grounded in the data, the researcher used in vivo coding in the first instance. She went through the entire data collection, noting the actual words and phrases that people had used during the interviews. The interviews with Ukrainian

participants and British trainers were analysed separately. This took some time and eventually there were over 250 words or phrases taken verbatim from the interviews within each nationality group.

The next phase of the process involved placing all of the collected words and phrases into categories, and giving them a number and further coding them with the name of the respondent and the date of the interview. These were then marked in the appropriate places within the data to facilitate cross referencing and to be able to examine what was said before and after a specific statement. See figure 1 for an example of the coding structure.

Figure 2 - Example of Coding Structure

“With one of the interpreters, sometimes we didn’t have a clue what was going on.”

The above statement raised the issue of interpreters and the code for this category was number 12. It was concerned with language and confusion and within this section was 12. 6. To this initial code the identity of the interviewee is added which as is the date of the interview. The actual code in its entirety was 12. 6/BT3/4. 98. BT = British Trainer and 4. 98, simply April 1998.

Each of the in vivo codes was placed on a file card, with the full code next to it. These were then transferred to the computer to enhance access. So, for example the in vivo code in figure 2 would be on the Interpretation and Language card with the full code next to it. Field notes were coded in the same way. During the process of the research each notebook was given a number and the dates when it was both started and filled. Observations and informal discussions recorded within the field notes were entered on the relevant category card, with a colour code to highlight it as a field note and the dates and number of the note book.

The researcher went through the data several times to ensure that she had not missed potentially important themes. Once this had been achieved, all of the categories were then placed on large charts and three much broader themes were identified. It seemed that all of the data could be placed into three categories: Preparation and Expectation, Training, and Change. All of the categories were then placed under these headings; responses from Ukrainian participants and British Trainers were organised separately in order that comparisons could be made.

In the first instance, the researcher went through the categories of each nationality separately. She sought to find themes emerging throughout the categories and made links in terms of some of those themes. This can be best demonstrated through using a concrete example from the data itself and is presented in the table below:

Figure 3 - Example of Analysis

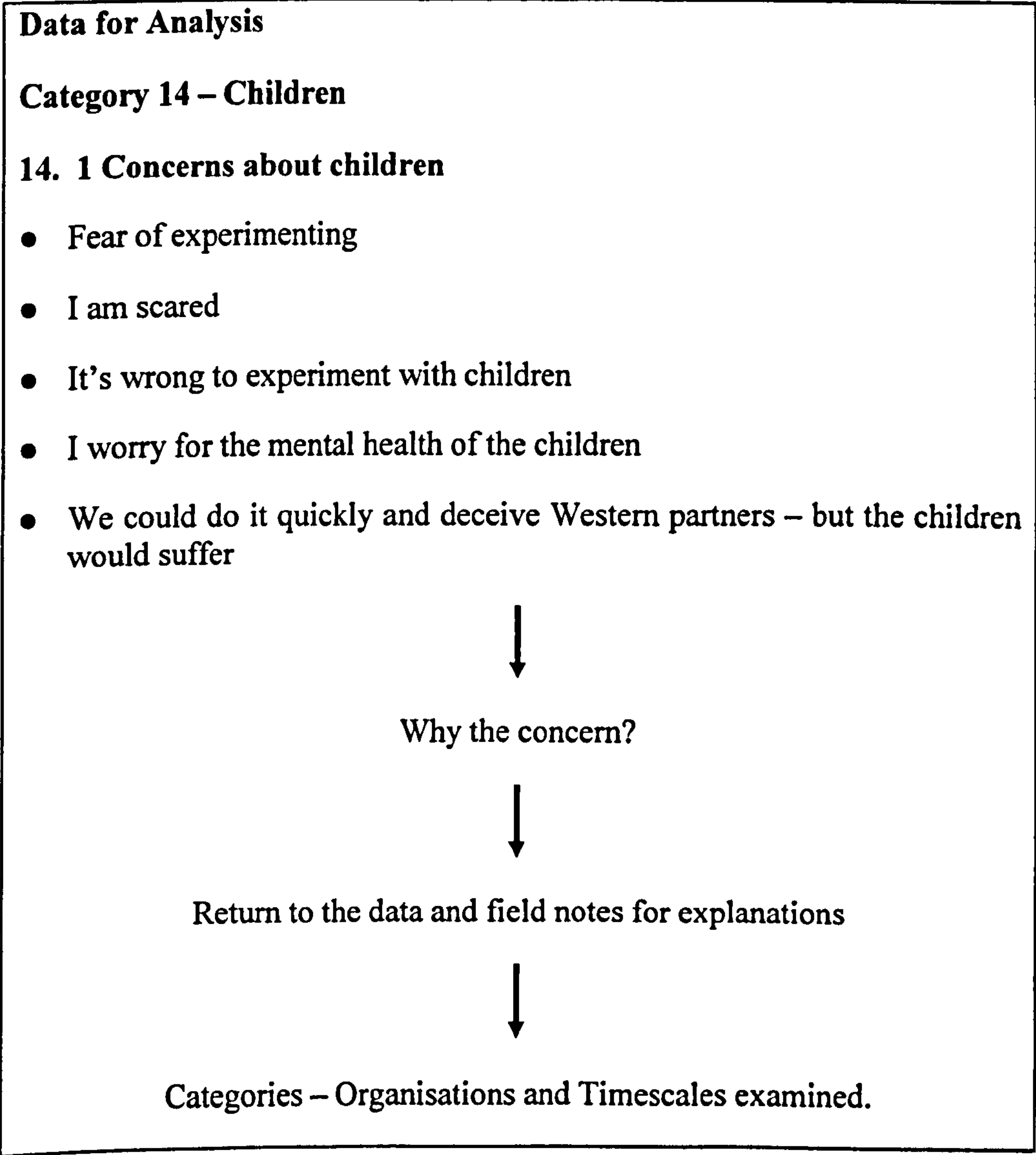


Figure 4 - Process of Analysis

Timescales: Respondents concerned about the short space of time that they had to introduce fostering as a concept and to pilot the first foster families.

Organisations: respondents were critical of UNICEF in terms of the pressures that were being placed upon them for results.

Field notes – informal conversations with researchers in the children's homes displayed a real concern for the situation of children in care. Many of the interviewees had visited the children's homes and had heard the personal testimonies of some of the children and young people living there. There seemed to have been an emotional reaction to this and as such feelings of anger and concern in the interviews in terms of the time restrictions placed upon them from the organisations who had not experienced the traumatic lives of the children first hand.

Literature: Ukraine experiencing a resurgence of nationalism and a sense of ownership of their country. Returning to the data, the researcher noticed another quote very close to a discussion of time scales "these are our children, Ukrainian children" As a result of this new sense of ownership, respondents may have felt an extra sense of responsibility towards the children with whom they had worked.

Conclusion 1 : On a personal level the Ukrainian participants had visited children's homes, some of which are in very poor condition. They had also heard some of the personal stories of the young people living there, many of which they found both shocking and disturbing. This made them protective towards the children, probably more so than those who had not seen the homes and heard the personal testimonies of the children.

Conclusion 2: This personal experience caused participants to be critical of the organisations involved for wanting to rush through change. They felt that the children with whom they had met would be damaged if there was insufficient preparation for the placement of children in foster homes. They understood that they could rush in changes in line with deadlines and were angry enough to voice this, but they realised that eventually it would be the children who would suffer.

Conclusion 3: On a broader level Ukrainian people are attempting to reclaim their country and culture, in this sense the participants would have been recognising the damage that had been done by large children's homes, and wanting to rectify the situation within a new found sense of civic responsibility and national pride.

Discussion – participants feel somewhat powerless as Western organisations have the authority to rush through changes based upon their own deadlines. They provide the funding for the projects and so the power to cut the funding is felt tangibly. The only power that the participants felt they had was that of deception but these feelings were out-weighted by concerns for the children.

People are struggling for a new sense of ownership of their country, they are protective towards children in care and are struggling to do their best by individual children that they have met and interviewed.

Each of the categories was analysed in this way, using the actual words of participants as a starting point for analysis and actual quotes from the interview transcripts. Links were made between the categories, as has been demonstrated above. As Dey (1993:96) suggests,

“Data assigned to different categories can be compared and interrelated to produce a more encompassing analysis of the data.”

As well as comparing categories, the researcher also revisited field notes constantly in order to find explanations of the data and to make links with the various categories. Cultural triangulation interviews, literature and field notes were also crucial in terms of setting the analysis and subsequent discussion within a cultural context – as has also been demonstrated in the example above.

Whilst the researcher followed a process to examine the data, there are some questions that arise in terms of how the issues for analysis were chosen. Each individual human will filter information differently and as Minichiello et al (1990) ask, how can we be sure that the filtering process is accurate and that hidden meanings sought are precise and not simply based upon the biases of the person who is analysing, and how can the analyst be sure that they are not mis-understanding the meanings that the participant is attempting to convey?

There is also an issue that Minichiello et al (1990) raise, in that the researcher needs,

“to go beyond the mere reporting of what was said. The researcher needs to create a picture of what might be the meaning. This is done in the context of charred symbols, language, culture and historical moments.”

Both of the above questions were particularly relevant in terms of this research, in that over half of the interviews and groups were conducted in a foreign language. The researcher addressed these issues in the following ways:

1. The interpreter was a crucial element within the data collection process. Once the interview had taken place, the researcher de-briefed the interpreter and asked for observations concerning mood and tone. The interpreter was asked about the interview in general and asked about

anything that s/he had noticed in terms of the answers given, the non-verbal communication and cultural nuances or words whose meaning may have been difficult to convey.

2. Literature was also important. Before embarking on the data collection the researcher examined the relevant literature: not simply that which dealt with development and consultancy, but also material concerned with cultural identity, Russian language and social history and the psychological impact of communism. In this way the researcher attempted to gain as in-depth an understanding as possible of the people she was interviewing and the culture and socio-political climate in which they lived.
3. Cultural triangulation was also used in this way, as has been mentioned above. The researcher did not simply talk to people about the training, but also discussed the nature of post-communism and the ways on which this had impacted upon people's lives. The researcher also has extensive experience in the region and this knowledge added depth to the research.

Research is essentially concerned with interpretation. With language interpretation, as has been addressed above, the interpreter will filter language through their own mind within which is a system of experiences, beliefs, values and meanings. The actual translation may contain elements of these. Research would seem to be similar, the data is examined through the mind of the analyst and as such goes through the same journey after which the analysis is produced. It seems that a researcher will make judgements about the data and will have personal interests that s/he wants to explore. To address this issue the researcher has attempted to remain close to the data, she was able to offer colleagues the opportunity to read interview transcripts and field notes (Dey 1990) in order to check out some of the categories selected and conclusions drawn. Critical social research recognises that researchers will bring with them certain biases, this research has been honest about that and has attempted to create mechanisms through which these do not heavily influence the conclusions whilst recognising that her experiences and beliefs cannot but be present within them.

Critique of Methodology

When conducting cross-cultural research there are many potential difficulties and limitations in terms of data collection. The greatest obstacles faced during the course of this research was the fact that the research field was two thousand miles away and the respondents spoke a different language. However these were not insurmountable problems and this section will attempt to examine the ways in which the researcher was able to collect valuable data in spite of geographical distance and linguistic differences.

In terms of getting to Ukraine, De Montfort University funded all flights and accommodation. The researcher was also able to work for weeks at a time in Ukraine, funded by other organisations working in the region. On these occasions the researcher went alone to Ukraine and this had several benefits. When travelling with other people of the same nationality, generally the group tend to stay together, for both practical purposes and in terms of work preparation and personal support. Travelling to Ukraine alone, the researcher wanted to live as far as possible in a style that was Ukrainian. Visits to the local market and shops and generally staying away from tourist attractions and shopping areas, the researcher was able to gain more of an insight into the everyday lives of Ukrainian people. People often speak a little English and the researcher was able to have some valuable conversations with local people about their experiences. This added considerable depths to the data, in that those involved with the courses were social workers or managers and those who were spoken to during the course of the visits were taxi drivers, shop keepers and neighbours. It gave the researcher more of a holistic view of cultural life in the country and did not simply restrict her to engaging with the participants on the courses. Also being aware of the literature around consultancy, the researcher did not want to cause resentment in terms of living an expensive existence when there was so much poverty in-country. Whilst there would be no way that the average Westerner could possibly comprehend the levels of hardship within which people lived, the researcher wanted to live in basic accommodation and shop at local markets to avoid being hypocritical and reinforcing the understandable resentments in terms of Western consultants lifestyles.

Overall the researcher spent over two months in Ukraine. It was not so much the time spent in-country, but how the researcher used it. As has been stated above, the intensity of the visits felt more important than the actual time spent there. Also the researcher undertook further work in other countries in the region conducting separate studies but ones which were centred around child care and development. Once again this added some valuable depth to the research. All of the countries in central and eastern Europe have differences, but there are also similarities and these provided important background information and a vital holistic vision of similar work in the region.

Language was probably the greatest difficulty to be overcome during the course of the research. The interviews were conducted with an interpreter present and the researcher made special attempts to ensure that the interpreters used were ones that had been employed on the training courses and who had been rated very highly by both trainers and participants. Also, as has been discussed within a previous chapter, the researcher realised early on that interpreters could provide important background information in terms of social and local knowledge that were of great use. At the end of every focus group or interview the researcher was able to ask the interpreter questions about the use of language in the interview and whether there had been any intonations or nuances that needed to be registered in the field notes. Some of these notes produced some crucial observations which have been an integral part of the data analysis.

There were considerable strengths in the way that the data was collected, the most poignant of these was the fact that the researcher already had a considerable knowledge of the region and was able to create a methodology that was based upon this knowledge. This research was conducted within a framework of critical social research, the researcher was keen that the study would consider all aspects of equal opportunity. The literature has shown that many consultants who work in the region have a limited knowledge of the specific issues affecting the lives of people there, and if the researcher had gone into the field with limited understanding this would have been doing exactly what the literature and subsequent results had censured. Previous under-graduate research had been conducted by the researcher into

the region and the lessons that were learned from this research served to strengthen the methodology. Previous experience had shown that research within a different culture could be problematic, particularly in terms of researching what are essentially very sensitive subjects and reinforced by the fact that Westerners could still be mistrusted. Based upon these issues, the researcher took great lengths to build trusting relationships with Ukrainian respondents. She informed people why she was there and of the fact that she was independent of the CSA. The researcher also took pains to have informal conversations with people about subjects that were related to the research question and made notes based upon their reactions. In terms of the focus groups conducted, the researcher wanted to discover the extent to which people were comfortable sharing information in groups and she used the training sessions to gauge this as well as possible. Once people had become used to sharing experiences in a group setting, the researcher broached with them the idea of a focus group and stressed that only those who wanted to need take part and that the others would have the opportunity of an individual interview.

The sensitivity with which the research has been conducted, has impacted upon the findings. The most disappointing aspect of which has been access to children's homes and the lack of more opportunities to discover at first hand the actual changes that have occurred. In this sense there is an ethical dilemma. On the one hand, further interviews with the children and staff in the homes would really have been able to uncover the success or otherwise of the consultancy process. However, children's homes in Ukraine are closely guarded by both Directors and the authorities. Some of the researchers from the UISR who attended the training courses had to fight hard to gain access to the homes, and as a Western researcher with no official business there, gaining access was even more difficult. The trusting relationships formed with some of the participants and the fact that they knew that I had much experience of children's homes in the region, made it much easier than it may otherwise have been. One of the Ukrainian researchers pointed out that some of the children and young people in the homes had been through traumatic experiences and were unable to build trusting relationships with the staff in the home that cared for them on a

daily basis. The extent to which they would have been comfortable with the researcher is questionable.

In the case of interviewing children, the researcher felt that it was important that their voices were heard, as they were at the heart of the programmes objectives. However, to have attempted to have forced access to the children or to have been overly persuasive would have been divisive on two levels. On the first level it would have been disrespectful of the feelings of participants and Directors. This research has been openly critical of the way in which the West imposes itself upon eastern European countries and to have pushed for access into the children's homes too strongly would have been hypocritical in the extreme. On a second level, the trainers had built up trusting relationships with participants and in some ways relied upon this in order that the courses would be successful. If the researcher had once again pushed too hard for access to the children, this behaviour could have placed both the training courses and potential changes in serious jeopardy. Politically the situation was sometimes tense, as has been demonstrated within the data analysis, and to have laboured the point would have been extremely insensitive and once again may have impacted upon future work in Ukraine.

It was for these political reasons that it was not possible to return to Ukraine to collect follow up data with Ukrainian participants. Once again, as has been demonstrated above, the organisations involved in the programmes had very different motivations and ways of working. Occasionally throughout the programmes, there was a breakdown in communications or hostility largely as a result of disagreements over funding. It was during one of these situations that the researcher had planned to return to Ukraine. She took advice from a full time British consultant in Ukraine who had day-to-day contact with the organisations involved, and also from a Ukrainian who had been involved in the training courses. She was informed that it would probably be unproductive to attempt to conduct further interviews. All permission had to be sought through the Director of the UISR and it was he who, was at the time, displeased with the British representatives of the projects. Obtaining access to the children's homes, the staff and participants of the courses had always been organised by the UISR and, as such, the

researcher risked at best a completely wasted journey and at worst, the future improvement of relations between the CSA and the UISR.

The distrust which some eastern European organisations have of their Western counterparts has been discussed above and could very well be one of the reasons why the researcher found it so difficult to conduct follow-up interviews, in which case, future research and researchers should make real efforts to ensure their independence from any organisation. The UISR may have felt that the researcher was in some way 'spying' on the projects and the people involved with them, and reporting back negative information to the British partners. Also, as the research findings suggest, there are many residues left over from the communist period. Under communism it was dangerous to be seen associating with foreigners and charges of espionage were not difficult to find oneself faced with. A Western researcher attempting to collect very sensitive information, armed with a tape recorder and note pad so fully able to present what might be perceived as incriminating evidence at a later date, may have reinforced feelings of reticence to allow further interviews to be carried out.

In short if similar research were to be conducted in the future, there is a need for absolute independence on the part of the researcher. Whilst all attempts were made to persuade people of the independent nature of the evaluation, it would have been difficult not to associate the research with the CSA. As far as the participants could see, the researcher often came out with the British trainers and this may have been sufficient for them to perceive a connection more concrete.

Chapter 8 - Data Analysis

British Trainers

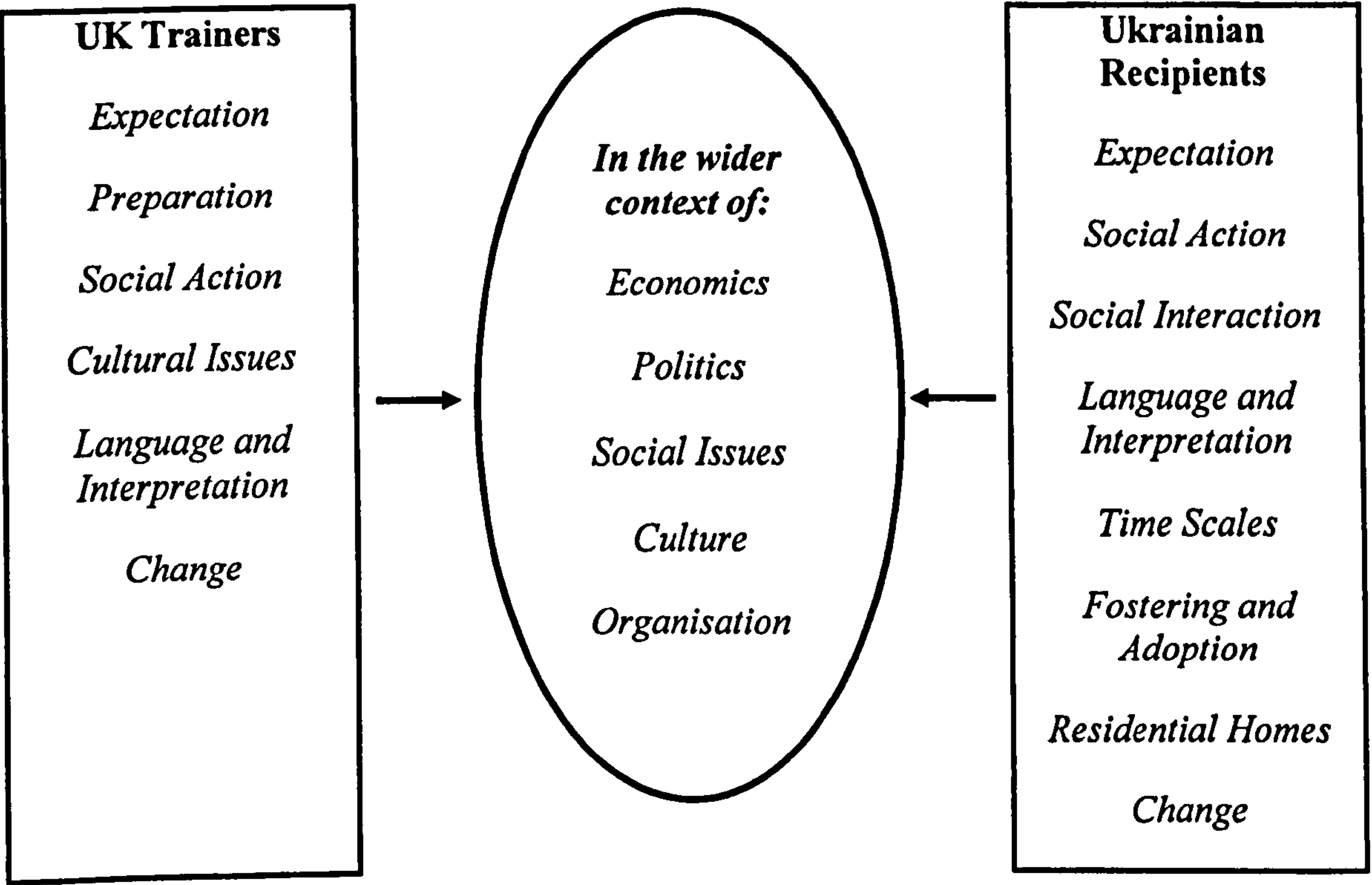
The social action method is a process which begins with the definition of a problem or situation from the perspective of the person(s) experiencing it. It goes on to ask why the situation exists within a broader structural context and how it can be changed. Action is taken and the group or individual will reflect upon that action and the process or cycle begins again. (Mullender and Ward 1991).

The work that was undertaken in Ukraine used this process in order to facilitate change within children's institutions and to introduce a pilot system of fostering and adoption. This process is reflected in the data with examples of how participants on the training courses were taken through it. On a broader level there is another process that has emerged from the data and that is the act of providing and receiving training, that begins with expectations and ends with the outcomes of the training and change for both Ukrainian and British partners.

Within the process of training provision and knowledge transfer there is also the wider context to consider. The nature of post-communist society, the economic situation in Ukraine and the social and political norms of the participants all impacted upon the training. Also within a wider context, the relationships between the organisations involved with the programme were pivotal to the training courses and impacted on a variety of different levels.

The process outlined in the diagram below will be used to analyse the data and will examine wider context issues that are connected with each stage. An analysis of the data gathered from British trainers will be presented first followed by an examination of the Ukrainian data. Finally some comparisons will be made between the two which will seek to make some conclusions regarding the success or otherwise of a cross-cultural knowledge transfer partnership.

Figure 5 - The Knowledge Transfer Process



Expectation

Amongst the British trainers interviewed there were several differences in terms of expectations, both in terms of wider expectations concerning the physical aspects of working in Ukraine and the training courses themselves.

Those that were clear about the expectations that they had spoke of the work in Ukraine as being arduous. They anticipated hardship both in terms of the physical conditions and of the training sessions they would be facilitating. A few of the trainers expected the training itself to be "dull and arduous." One of the trainers was not hopeful about the amount of actual change that could occur, given the size of both Ukraine and the children's institutions.

In the first instance, several of the British trainers maintained that they had no expectations whatsoever. They argued that they wanted to arrive in Ukraine with a "Blank sheet of paper" and not try to imagine what the work or the country would be like. However further on in the interviews there seemed to be some contradictions, as one trainer expressed concerns about what the physical conditions would be like and obviously had the expectation that the climate, the diet and the living arrangements would be very different. He also expressed concerns about his health.

Another trainer who maintained that she did not have any expectations, also went on to state that she had not had the opportunity in the UK to make a real difference and she felt that the work in Ukraine would give her this chance. From the data she felt too bound up within the regulations of her local authority and wanted to use social action in order to create the kind of change that she felt unable to implement in her position as a local authority social worker.

Similarly, another trainer stated that one of his motivations for going to work in Ukraine was the fact that his work in the UK would not give him the freedom he wanted to experiment with different ways of working, once again he felt restricted by the limits placed upon him within a social services environment. He said:

"Having worked in local authorities for so long in this country, the doom and gloom and despondency and the blame culture and everything else - I heard stories about people (in Ukraine) who were struggling against desperate odds, but who were actually celebrating their successes and taking things forward."

He goes on to state that he is committed to social action methods but in the context of social services department, he continually has to defend the process to managers who are tied by tight legislation within set structures. It would seem from the data that this trainer wanted to be able to use social action freely without having to defend his way of working. This is obviously an expectation and leads to the question of whether he expected to be able to use social action with Ukrainians without the restraints and the criticisms that he encountered in the UK.

Two of the trainers used spy related images whilst talking about their expectations. There were references made to John Le Carre and 1950s espionage thrillers and whilst these may have been flippant or humorous remarks made, they perhaps deserve some further examination. During the Cold War period the Soviet Union was seen as a threat to Western security and images of Soviet and Russian people in films reflected a Russophobia that automatically saw the communists as the enemy.

Lieven (2000:4) speaks of the prevalence of Russophobia, even within a period that has seen the end of communism. He maintains that the distrust of the old USSR is evident today and that:

"Selected or invented facts about the "enemy", nation, its culture and racial nature are taken out of context and slotted into prearranged intellectual structures to arraign the unchanging wickedness of the other side."

Certainly there is no suggestion that trainers were convinced of the inherent evil of the Former Soviet Union, but there remains the question as to the extent to which these images have impacted on trainers' thoughts concerning Eastern Europe. Certainly some of the comments made by trainers about the 'grim' and 'arduous' nature of Ukraine, could probably have been based to some extent upon media stereotypes of Soviet life and culture. During the course of the interviews, the trainers who had had these particular expectations went on to state that they had been quickly dashed when they had seen Kyiv and particularly when they had met with the Ukrainian participants on the courses.

"It was completely different, it was incredibly exciting ... I felt very, very comfortable in the country and still do. My expectations, such as they were, sort of dashed completely but in a very positive way."

Preparation

The British trainers had some very different ideas about the amount of preparation that was needed before going out to Ukraine. The majority interviewed felt that little was required because they trusted so firmly in social action as a process.

"I like the idea of going into new situations whether it's Birmingham or another country with a blank sheet of paper but a very sure approach."

"I'm not a big preparation person."

"You need to just trust in the (social action) process."

These trainers were all committed and experienced social action workers. The fact that they are experiential workers is also reflected in the preparation they undertook. They maintained that rather than prepare

themselves with information in UK, it is far better to learn directly from people what their lives and culture are like.

"It's much nicer to learn from the participants rather than having it all written down. We learned a lot from them, they were very enthusiastic and willing to talk about and share their culture. Personally I prefer it that way, I knew nothing about Ukraine. Certain parts you have to experience - you have to go in with an open mind and think: this is what it's like because this is how it's described by them."

Another trainer argued that flexibility was important and went on to say that in terms of training it is not possible to go into sessions completely prepared. It would seem that as a social action worker, this flexibility was very much part of his practice. Social action trainers do not want either to enter a group with an agenda or to manipulate its direction. They recognise that the people with whom they are working may raise unexpected issues and the facilitator must be sufficiently skilled to be able to deal with these spontaneously.

For the most part, the British trainers maintained that they had been adequately prepared for their work in Ukraine. However there was one interesting contradiction. One of the trainers argued that she had received very limited preparation for her work in Ukraine and she believed that adequate preparation was absolutely crucial in order for the work to be successful and the condescending Western consultant stereotype avoided:

"I think if we go to other countries we have a duty to understand something about political, social and cultural things and what's happening in the country. There have been times where I've felt like an arrogant Westerner who presumes that just because I have skills I also have understanding."

The main characteristic of all of this particular interview was that of presumption, the word is mentioned several times and what comes across is a feeling of real concern around issues of power. This trainer recognised her potential power and wanted to do all she could to avoid using that power, or to appear completely ignorant of the culture and social context of Ukraine.

It is important to note here that the above trainer had had experience of long term work overseas and was also very aware of the concept of culture shock: she continues:

"I think it takes two weeks to get over your culture shock ... to be immersed in something that is so different and then to be expected to work effectively and appropriately within the context of that - I think that's enormously high expectations."

It would seem here that the view of this trainer is based upon her specific experience. As a result of living and working within a different culture she was more aware of the potential for harm and ineffective working as a result of having insufficient knowledge of the culture and mechanisms through which to deal with cultural difference.

From the data, it would seem that there are two distinct approaches to preparation emerging. The **Experiential Approach** attempts to learn about cultural and social issues through talking to participants on the courses and through ongoing learning based inside that culture. The attempt not to make assumptions seems to be evidence that social action trainers are committed to work that is centred on the understanding and experiences of individuals, they would rather get a feel for the actual group, rather than arrive with assumptions of how that group will work.

The **Preparational Approach** recognises that there are important facts that one should know about a given culture, *before* one goes to work within it. This approach would seem to be based upon an understanding that cross-cultural working can be very intense and emotionally difficult and that trainers should be aware of the extent to which one can work successfully within these constraints.

From the data it would seem that both approaches have at their core a commitment to anti-oppressive behaviour and practice. Bailey and Brake (1975 in Thompson 1997:11) maintains that anti-discriminatory practice in terms of social work lies within a recognition that the social welfare systems,

"Located at the centre of the contradictions arising from the dehumanising consequences of capitalist economic production"

He goes on to argue that social workers who work in an anti-discriminatory fashion are those who:

"Have the potential for recognising these contradictions and, through working at the point of interaction between people and their social environment, of helping to increase the control by people over economic and political structures."

He continues by arguing that oppression can occur on three different levels and that social workers should be aware of all of them. The first is the Personal Level, which refers to personal feelings and attitudes. The cultural level is concerned with patterns of consensus which are assumed to be 'right' and 'normal'. The Structural level refers to social divisions and is concerned with how oppression and discrimination are institutionalised and woven into society. As well as offering a model from which to develop an understanding of discrimination, the Personal Cultural Social (PCS) model also offers a means through which the concept of power can be explored, for ultimately inequality occurs when groups, communities and individuals have more power than other groups within that same society. (Thompson 1993) To take sexism as an example, Bullock and Stallybrass (1977:571 in Thompson 1993:38) define sexism as,

"A deep rooted, often unconscious system of beliefs, attitudes and institutions in which distinctions between people's intrinsic worth are made on the grounds of their sex, and sexual roles."

Within the words 'beliefs, attitudes and institutions' one can observe the PCS model at work in terms of power. Beliefs and attitudes represent the personal aspects of power in terms of sexist feelings. A belief could be said to result in certain attitudes towards women and these are both reflected in behaviour. The institutional level is described by Millett (1971) who argues that:

"the military, industry, technology, universities, science, political office, finance, and in short every avenue of power within society, including the coercive force of the police, is entirely in male hands."
(in Thompson 1993:38)

In terms of the two approaches used for preparation, the social action workers who used the Experiential Approach want to begin with the people with whom they are working. These workers would seem to be focused

largely on the personal level: they wanted to talk to Ukrainians about their experiences and cultural frames of reference. One of them argued that you can read about Ukraine and talk to people about it and be very well prepared, but eventually you have to see it through your own eyes and create your own understanding based upon your own experience. One trainer offers this critique of preparation:

"You can't know everything before you start. If you do I don't think that your mind is so open and you're not so willing to look at things as they really are. It was an incredible experience during that first week of learning from the people themselves, rather than coming prepared to the hilt."

The preparational approach provides a broad picture of what to expect in terms of culture and the political, economic and social situation and this seems to be based on a desire to be as understanding and respectful as possible based upon previous cross-cultural experiences. This approach seems to be embedded within the cultural and structural levels in that these workers wanted to know in advance the context of the lives of Ukrainians and the types of systems and structures that they work within.

In terms of the PCS model, the preparational approach seems to recognise some of the wider contextual issues of power within a development context, it is conscious of the potential for damage. Those who spoke of preparation also spoke of some of the power dynamics concerned with development situations. The experiential approach recognises more the personal level of the model and is focused very much upon the participants' groups and their own definitions of the world in which they live, it does not seem to address the wider cultural and organisational aspects of working within a development context. Whilst both sets of trainers recognised the implications of working with foreign organisations, it was the trainers who were keen to prepare that argued that it would have been useful to have known about the dynamics of all of the agencies involved.

A style that incorporated both approaches would have given the trainers an idea of the structures and systems that have influenced the lives of Ukrainians, and would also have made them aware of some of the cultural norms of Ukraine. Subsequently, once in Ukraine, they could have built up

this understanding by talking to participants and using all of this knowledge to enhance both their cross-cultural work and understanding.

Within a wider context, most of the trainers interviewed would have valued some information regarding the organisations involved in the training and about some of the dynamics between them. There seemed to be a lack of understanding about the roles of the various bodies and this caused some communication difficulties. The most serious of these occurred when trainers were introduced to an important representative of one of the partner organisations and appeared rude because they did not know who he was.

The above situation demonstrates some of the power dynamics at work. The trainers interviewed maintained that within training sessions they were committed to working with participants based on a model that espouses equality. Once out of the training situation, the trainers above revealed themselves as not having considered some of the issues around working within a foreign organisation. Whilst there were issues of interpretation concerning the situation, the fact remains that the trainers dealt with the situation insensitively, as a result of insufficient knowledge of the partner agency and the people within it. The Ukrainian Institute for Social Research (UISR) is a politically sensitive organisation and the management of the CSA has always tried to maintain positive relationships with its Director and senior researchers. However, information had not been passed down to the training team and as such trainers had inadvertently broken protocol.

The lack of knowledge of the structure of the organisation and the people within it, coupled with the language barrier resulted in a situation where both parties were upset. Within the social action process, the question 'why' is an important stage and is used by trainers to allow participants to analyse their situation. However within this particular instance, the trainers had simply taken the situation at face value and had become upset. Maybe if they had analysed the situation in terms of language and different organisational protocols, they would have handled the situation differently. As well as the process of social action the CSA works to principles which guide their work with people, they are particularly focused on non-judgmental principles:

“Social Action workers are committed to social justice. We strive to challenge inequality and oppression in relation to race, gender, sexuality, age, religion, class, culture, disability, or any other forms of social differentiation.”

The principle that follows on from this is similar in its attitude towards ways of working with people:

“We believe that all people have skills, experience, and understanding that they can draw on to tackle the problems they face. Social action workers understand that people are experts on their own lives and we can use this as a starting point for our work.”

These principles seem to suggest an overall common denominator of respect, however they do not seem to be apparent in the way the above situation was handled. If the trainers had used the principles to guide their work they would have acted more sensitively, with an understanding of their power as Western trainers. Social action recognises the fact that social and youth work agencies and the professionals within them have power and the key to social action is to allow people to make decisions about their own situations. This seems clear for workers within the British cultural context in which they are working, they have been able to develop their social action practice in a well-established professional structure, working with colleagues who are generally like-minded or who at least have a understanding of social and community work. Whilst in the training room, trainers used the social action method and from their responses, thought quite carefully about cultural differences. When working with representatives from other agencies, the boundaries became blurred. The trainers may have perceived the participants as the ‘client group’ and as such used the social action process and the corresponding principles as a guide, they may have perceived the Director of the Institute in the same way that they perceived management within a British context, that is, with the same level of knowledge and understanding as themselves. However, within a Ukrainian context, whilst managers may have the same level of seniority in Ukraine and a professional understanding of research and social issues within their own professional context, they will still act and behave differently because they are culturally different.

British trainers all stated that the process of social action was culturally transferable, however they spoke about this purely in terms of the work they undertook within the training room. They did not particularly speak about using the principles to guide their work whilst in-country.

Although the trainers would argue that they do not want to impose and that they do not patronise, the reality is different, in that outside of the training sessions they are behaving in a way that demonstrates the power they possess. Freire (1970:32) continues:

"The oppressor is solidary with the oppressed only when he stops regarding the oppressed as an abstract category and sees them as persons who have been unjustly dealt with ... and when he stops making pious, sentimental and individualistic gestures and risks an act of love."

The act of love that Freire talks of could be discussed in the development context in terms of the ability to recognise the power that one has within one's role as a development professional, and the ability to be able to place it aside and to cross over onto the side of the oppressed. This should not merely occur within the training session but should incorporate the entire training trip, for as has been argued above, with cultural difference coupled with language barriers there is plenty of potential for misunderstanding.

Freire's writings are heavily influenced by his Catholicism and within this the notions of sacrifice and humility are paramount. The act of love could mean not simply a will to 'help' the oppressed or as Freire maintains 'pious, sentimental and individualistic gestures,' but a commitment to place aside one's own agenda and to place oneself firmly on the side of those with whom one is working. Social action trainers would maintain that the process attempts to do just this, but in reality, it is important to recognise human limitations. The two women who were involved in the above situation felt that the entire week had been patriarchal and that they had felt excluded. The incident occurred at the end of the week, and as women who had been used to working within an atmosphere that espoused anti-sexist ways of working, they were frustrated and felt marginalized. In this situation, the act of love of which Freire speaks, may have been the ability to see the complexity of the situation. By asking the important question 'why' they may have come to understand that the Head of the UISR had

been socialised within a society that has very clear traditional gender roles. Many people in the FSU also relate feminism to socialism and as the latter has been rejected, feminism seems to be guilty by association. There is also the sense in which there are two power dynamics present within this situation, that of gender and that of development. In terms of gender, the two women felt oppressed by the attitudes of the Head of the Institute, and in turn he may have felt that he was in a position where his power was being threatened. The women concerned only saw as far as sexist attitudes and did not consider their own power within the situation. The Head of the Institute may have seen women, but he also must have seen Western experts who he may have perceived to have the power to control the programme in whatever way they might want.

In this way we can observe international elements of power seeping into both the organisational and personal context. Attitudes of West is Best are prevalent in Eastern Europe, although as has been discussed earlier there are elements of backlash to notions of Western superiority. The Director may well have been displaying some of this within the above situation. During an interview with him, he was very critical of Western aid and stated that he was not in a position to refuse any of it, for refusal might mean even useful assistance would discontinue. Having once been a very powerful figure, he may have thought that his position had changed into one of supplicant and sought to redress the balance.

As well as the above power issue, there were also some confusions concerning the relationships between the organisations. Trainers were unclear at the outset and did not know about how the courses were funded and who had responsibilities for which areas. There was also some confusion as to the motivations of the various organisations concerned and how much power each of them had within the programmes:

"I didn't know how it all fitted together, and what the relationship with the Centre and UNICEF and the Institute. There was never any understanding of how it fitted together and then how as a consultant I could link into all that."

It would seem that it would have been useful for trainers to have been given a little more information about both the various organisations and the

individuals within them. In any country there are certain protocols that should be followed, many Eastern European organisations have a bureaucratic structure with a clearly defined hierarchy. Embarrassment could have been avoided if trainers had received some information around these issues. As has been argued above, as social action trainers, they were clear how the social action process hands over the power of content to the group, they were also aware of the potential for facilitators to dominate the group or to impose their own values. However, they did not recognise this as being a potential hazard outside of the training room and seemed to lose the sensitivity that they displayed within it.

The key would appear to be preparation. Trainers only received limited information about Ukraine, this was largely of a practical nature and did not attempt to explore any of the issues of using social action within a cross-cultural development context. When problems occurred trainers were asked simply to 'trust in the process'. The social action process is one which attempts to unwrap and analyse a situation through a series of questions and whilst this is essentially a training tool, it may have benefited the trainers to have used it in a holistic way whilst working in Ukraine. Had the two trainers debriefed the situation using social action, they may have been able to understand the dynamics of the circumstances and the power relations that have been discussed above.

On a more practical level, the CSA could also have provided more information about the people and the organisations with whom they would be working, this would have enabled the training team to be clear about the dynamics of the agencies involved. The Centre is committed to the principles of anti-oppressive practice (AOP), however as will be discussed in more depth later, there are principles of AOP that are very specific to a development context, and differences in terms of the ways in which oppressions are perceived from culture to culture. Training and the development of an understanding of some of these differences would have gone some way to developing the trainers understanding of the situations they might face, and given them the tools to deal with them appropriately.

Training

Social Action

Social action was discussed by trainers on several different levels. It was described as a method of working with people; as a process; and as a style of working that was culturally transferable. Alongside the above there are also other issues that have impacted on the training itself, these include organisational issues and practical concerns such as language, cross-cultural working and working with difference.

Method and Process

The social action method of working with people was seen by most of the trainers as being centred upon the knowledge and experience of those who attended the courses. The data suggests that it is perceived as a way of empowering people: first by asking them to define their problem and then taking them through a process which one of the trainers describes thus:

"You actually allow people to utilise their skills and their knowledge to reach a solution to a problem as defined by themselves."

Another trainer speaks of social action on a similar level:

"Our training out there is essentially process led, it's about asking questions but it's about the people you're working with controlling the content."

From the data it would seem that the most important element of social action, is the fact that trainers do not believe that anything is being imposed upon the people with whom they are working. The model was compared by one trainer with a didactic style of training:

"It (didactic training) assumes that you are an empty vessel and you will be filled with knowledge ... so the mere fact of sticking people in a circle and not lecturing but asking a series of questions within which they can paint a picture was liberating for people."

It would seem from the data that social action workers are committed to working with people in a certain way. They are keen not to impose their own values and this seems to be based upon deeply held beliefs about working with people, which is rooted in both a commitment to anti-oppressive practice and frustration with traditional teaching/training

methods where the teacher or trainer is perceived as the expert and her students as those with less knowledge.

One of the trainers spoke of how social action was based upon very personal principles of working with people:

“For me it’s just basic principles of how you work with people, whether you’re working with a group of people or whether you work with one person. It’s a very basic principle of respecting people.”

The only exception within the interviews conducted was a trainer who was sceptical, not so much of the process but of the wider context of the situation in Ukraine and the problems that this presented. She argued that it was wrong to assume that social action would work in any context. However she then went on to suggest that she had based most of her working career upon its principles. This attitude would seem to be rooted once again upon a real desire not to be oppressive. The issue with this trainer would seem to be based upon the fact that she was frustrated with what she could achieve in terms of the work in Ukraine. She felt uncomfortable with the fact that she was only visiting the country for one week at a time and was conscious of people perceiving her as an “arrogant Westerner.”

When this particular trainer talks of using social action methods she becomes very enthusiastic about the work that she undertook in Ukraine. Immediately after she talks of arrogance and presuming that social action can work in another country she says:

“The training itself was really, really exciting. This was because of the way the people took part responded - which was incredibly quick at latching on to new ideas. By the second day, it was like the light bulb came on and they realised they didn’t need their notebooks but that they had a lot more of themselves and that was very empowering.”

Once again, this was the trainer who had previous experience of working overseas and the emotional and very personal investment that she had made during a long period of time in a developing country, seemed to be reappearing in her work in Ukraine. She had a wider understanding of some of the cross cultural issues that can impact upon overseas work and she was fearful that she would inadvertently oppress people through the imposition

of a certain way of working. However, whilst these concerns were based upon prior experiences she was still confident that social action can work within the right conditions.

The other social action workers seemed to be less able to see the wider picture and some of the issues that could have an impact on the work undertaken. They talked about social action in a very small scale way. They spoke of the groups with which they had been involved and how people within the training sessions had responded to the method. Few of them had considered any wider contextual issues and when they did they spoke of them as areas of concern that affected the smaller group or themselves as workers. They rarely spoke about the conditions which affected both the work and the lives of the participants, or of the cultural context within which they were working. They had firmly focused upon the training room and the participants, further supporting the notion that social action was a process that they associated with training alone.

Imposition

Social action is a process that claims not to impose itself upon groups, communities or individuals. However, many of the people on the actual courses did not have the choice as to whether they used the social action process or not: this decision was made at the highest levels of the partner organisations and the Centre for Social Action (CSA) was commissioned to undertake the work.

In many ways, social action was imposed, although as with any training courses, there are those who make decisions about the training providers. If the CSA had decided to go to Eastern Europe to impose itself on an organisation or community, this could have been considered oppressive because it would have made the decision for itself that its methods were wholly appropriate for the situation. However, it was the Ukrainian partners who had experienced the work of the CSA who asked them to provide the training, feeling that it would be suitable for the circumstances and the people involved.

On an individual or group level, the very process of social action claims to allow participants to have control of the content. In other words, the actual

method may be imposed upon participants, but the content is decided by the participants themselves. Based upon observations of the courses, this would certainly seem to be the case. Just as one of the trainers stated above, social action creates a framework and the participants themselves fill that structure based upon their own experiences and development needs.

The activities offer a means through which participants can describe their situation. Once the description stage is complete, participants are then taken through a series of exercises designed to make them consider the situation and ways in which it can be addressed. These thoughts are then translated into action plans, and in this way the groups of participants were able to translate what they had discovered themselves into a strategy, that would allow them to create change based upon their own definition of the problem. There are difficulties and obstacles that are inherent within the process and these will be addressed later on, but in short, the social action process really seems to attempt to use the experience and knowledge of those with whom they work, rather than presenting ideas or solutions that may not be appropriate.

One of the trainers argued that some of the other development options were completely imposed and that at least social action tried hard not to define need and to dictate change:

"What's the alternative (to social action)? Take people presents and teddy bears and patronise them through the roof and tell them exactly what the answers are – bearing in mind we can't even catch a bus in Belarus?!"

Eastern Europe has received much in the way of humanitarian aid alluded to by the above trainer and there have been many criticisms of this type of intervention, in that it increases dependency upon Western assistance. If people are given the opportunity to work through their problems based upon knowledge of their own culture and the structures within it, the solutions that they arrive at and the subsequent changes that are made are far more likely to be sustainable. Another trainer developed the argument:

"While we're trying to deinstitutionalise kids and get them back into the community and back with their families, they are setting up institutions and trying to strengthen them by sending out convoys of Western food and Western clothes and promoting international

exchanges in the worst sense – holidays for kids abroad with a view to international adoption. I think that's the worst sort of dependency-creating."

This sort of material aid, makes an assumption of what is needed. Through Western eyes the poor state of children's homes in Eastern Europe should be made better through material goods. Organisations that deliver this kind of aid, however well intentioned they might be, are addressing the situation based upon their own idea of need.

This social action trainer also discussed imposition of another kind. He named one particular organisation that sends out social workers to work in the countries of Eastern Europe:

"I'm very critical of that way of operating because you can't get over the fact that you have a Westerner there, who's there as the fount of all knowledge ... I think it creates the wrong power relationships, it sends the wrong message."

The message would in this sense certainly seem to be one which states that Westerners have the expertise and that they go to Eastern Europe because they know what to do and their colleagues in the East do not. Both of the methods seem to involve overt imposition of either material goods or practice. There is a power relationship which places Eastern European people as those who do not have either the knowledge or the means to create change for themselves. Two trainers spoke about the fact that social action is based upon a desire to respect people and a recognition that all people have the skills and experience they need to transform their own situation. Trainers spoke both of entering into a dialogue with people and an exchange rather than a transfer of ideas:

"What we're trying to do is take the cutting edge of best practice in the UK and enter into a dialogue with people about what is appropriate for Ukraine, but we don't make a judgement on that, beyond getting them to think through different models and their values and principles and how they can put them into practice."

"It's got to be helpful to have different exchanges of ideas and thoughts, things that work and things that don't work."

Transferability

Following on from arguments about imposition there comes the discussion around transferability of the social action method. Most of the British trainers were very confident that social action is entirely culturally transferable. They felt that this was the case largely due to the fact that the method is uncomplicated and embedded in the participant's own experience. One trainer maintained that social action works as well with young people and children as it does with high level service providers and managers. In terms of cultural transferability he argued that, within the UK, there are different cultures not simply in terms of ethnic diversity but also within a white British culture:

"Every culture from housing estate to housing estate is so different that your questions need to be all-embracing and very wide."

Most of the trainers agreed that the process of social action was what made it transferable, in that wherever one is working, social action is simply a framework for asking people to define their own situation and to create solutions for themselves, with the trainer simply facilitating the ideas of the group as opposed to giving them information.

One of the trainers maintained social problems could be understood without placing them within a cultural context:

"An alcoholic in England is very similar, I would suggest, to alcoholism in Ukraine and it's not too helpful for people in your family."

Whilst this may seem to be the case, there are still cultural differences that make an alcohol problem in Ukraine vastly different to similar cases in England. Across cultures there are different attitudes towards the use of alcohol. Within Ukrainian culture it would seem to be an important part of socialising. Whilst in the field, there were many instances where alcohol was used to welcome people and to thank them. There is a protocol when one shares a drink with Ukrainians. Toasts are made before each drink and one should not begin drinking until the toast is finished.

Whilst one could certainly agree to a certain extent with the trainer, that alcohol causes similar problems across cultures, there is also the need to

recognise the fact that on another level there are also distinct differences, in terms of traditions concerning alcohol, its importance in terms of social etiquette, attitudes in terms of acceptability and the ways in which it is dealt with once diagnosed.

The framework of social action, the process of naming, analysing, acting and transforming would seem to be transferable, as it does not present solutions and maintains that it is grounded in the experiences of participants. However, the cultural differences and the personal experiences that the British trainers bring to the courses impact upon the training that is delivered (this will be discussed further on in this chapter).

Organisational Issues

Within the social action training programmes, it became apparent that there were some frictions between the agencies who were both managing, coordinating, funding and delivering them. The nationality of the organisations, their culture, structure and perceived hierarchy of their place within the programme, all seemed to impact upon the training provision. The complexities of their history and ways of working, and the beliefs and experiences of those working within them, gave rise to the conflict and power struggles that will be examined within this section.

It is appropriate, in the first instance to examine the nature of the UISR. As the hosting agency they were of crucial importance. The training was being delivered in their country, they recruited participants and it was within their cultural context that the programmes were being delivered. They were also the agency responsible for implementing the changes and as such the culture, hierarchy, and perceptions of this organisation, were paramount.

The UISR was formed under communist rule. Prior to the end of communism and before the break up of the USSR, the Institute held a considerable amount of political power. Ideology could be said to be the glue that held communism together, from the nursery to the work place there were always people within every institution with responsibilities for ideology. Most importantly as Harwin (1995) argues, educating young people on Marxist politics was seen as vital for the continuation of the USSR. The UISR was originally the Youth Problems Institute, and came

under the umbrella of Komsomol, the youth agency of which all young people had to be members, and which was one of the most powerful organisations within the party machine. One of the participants continues:

"Komsomol was very important and the more active you were, the better your prospects. If you were expelled from Komsomol, your life was over really."

Those enjoying positions of authority within the Youth Problems Institute were in influential roles. The more connected one was to the party, and the higher one's rank, the more power one possessed. In an era where there was increasing levels of poverty and shortages, important contacts could provide access to better housing, improved education and other similar benefits.

With the fall of communism and the move into capitalism and market economics, the structures changed somewhat. No longer could influence within the party gain you privileges. The bargaining system was replaced with hard cash and money became the commodity that could offer power and influence under new conditions, where anything associated with socialism or communism was an anathema.

With the onslaught of capitalism, access to hard currency and Western organisations became important. The Head of the UISR was quick to forge links with the CSA during the early 1990s. Such links meant potential visits to the West and more access to hard currency and goods. There was also an element of associating oneself to a Western organisation in order to distance oneself from the now reviled Communist past. The literature (Gilbert 1998; Holden et al 1999) suggests that Western business consultants believe that Russian managers are having difficulties in adapting to new ways of working: if one is seen to be a Russian manager adjusting well and working successfully with Western colleagues, one could certainly suggest that s/he would be seen in a very positive light by both Western organisations and her/his peers and managers. As a consequence, Western organisations may be more inclined to fund programmes thus providing financial power, as well as that of associated power of status in their own country through being in such close contact with Western institutions.

Organisations such as the UISR were no longer perceived as important in terms of ideology. The name Youth Problems Institute, which has negative

and even punitive overtones, was changed to the Ukrainian Institute for Social Research and was moved into the Ministry for Youth and Sport. The key to its success was no longer the push to create a new generation of enthusiastic young communists, but to create improved systems of social welfare for families and young people ensuring that Ukrainian social policy was up to Western European standards. Ukrainian people are keen to foster a new sense of identity, and many of the people interviewed wanted to rid themselves of their socialist past, perceiving themselves to have far more in common with Europe than with the new CIS.

The culture of the UISR had to change quickly, for to be able to work in partnership with Western organisations, there was much that had to be learned. Within a capitalist environment, there are strict financial regulations tied to programmes of work or consultancy, and spending must be accounted for. Projects must be monitored and evaluated and there is a system of accountability. If the outcomes are not visible, the funding is pulled, or at least not supplied for future projects.

It would seem that most of the organisational difficulties stemmed from two issues related to the arguments above. On the one hand people were being told that work with Western partners was crucial since it brought with it both money and status. On the other hand however, it was extremely difficult both to become used to this new way of working and to suddenly be in a position where foreign organisations and agencies are able to make demands on you, after years of being powerful because of ideological-centred work.

There are several ways in which people manifested these issues within the training process. One could see elements of this in the way that the UISR was once perceived, through some of the actions of the participants. The training groups were made up largely of people working directly with children and young people, but amongst them there were researchers from the Institute.

Some of the trainers remarked that during some of the training courses that they had facilitated, staff from the UISR had sought to either stop heated conversations, or signalled to the interpreter not to translate them. Within the field notes there is also a very clear example of this. During a

discussion around residential child care, the conversation became very intense, the trainers were busy attempting to understand what the group was saying, but observing the interview, one of the institute researchers made a gesture to the interpreter that was clearly a sign that she did not want a certain part of the conversation translated. The trainer spoke of this particular instance and maintained that there were several occasions where a member of the Institute intervened and either brought a conversation to a close or changed the subject.

"The Ukrainian trainers kept stopping the discussion because it was so sensitive, it was about preparing children for fostering – there were some very different opinions and we would have liked them to have been aired, but the group was being shut up and we were being shut up."

The fact that the participants did not challenge the fact that they were being silenced, and did not insist that the interpreter translate, seems to suggest that there remains a certain amount of apprehension to challenge representatives from the Institute, and this may well stem from the political and ideological power that it once had. As has been argued earlier, it was not safe to challenge party authority under the old system and participants may well have felt intimidated into remaining silent.

Having once been used to this level of authority under the old system, the above situation may also be a way of asserting power that has been taken away, and this can be examined on two different levels. The researchers from the Institute once possessed the power of knowledge. Within Ukraine and as part of the party machine they were able to affect Soviet policy and largely this must have gone unchallenged. The party was always right, so a challenge to the validity of its research was unlikely. Within the training room, Western consultants had control, whilst they may not have liked it, they were also perceived as possessing knowledge. The manifestation of this change in status may well have been the attempts to halt conversations or stop the interpreter.

There were also other demonstrations of this sense of frustration. One of the trainers said that one of the Ukrainians had shouted at her and told her that she, "didn't understand Ukraine." This comment was made by several participants but mainly by the Institute staff. Once again, this seems to be a

way of trying to take back some control. The 'West is best' view is prevalent in the region, and the institute staff would seem to reflect this. They asked many questions about life in the west, not just about services for children in the UK, but about all sorts of other aspects of Western life. One of the participants even asked about one of the trainers nails, the products she used and general advice around manicuring!

It would seem that the only ways through which they felt able to regain control were either to withhold information, or to criticise the Western trainers for their lack of information concerning Ukraine. Mikkelsen (1995) argues that this is a common occurrence within development in that participants often feel powerless within the process, but the only way in which they are able to recapture this power is through the sabotage or disruption of the development initiative.

Funding has been a difficult issue for some of the participants who have been involved in the organisational aspects of the programme. They have argued that UNICEF has used money as a 'tool for manipulation' and withheld payments if the project is not meeting deadlines.

Even within the not-for-profit sector, funding is of vital importance and the need to account for anything spent is a familiar feature of NGOs who are answerable to fundraisers and senior management in terms of budget and expenditure. In Ukraine, and in many central and eastern European countries, civil society and the frameworks that govern it are not fully developed. (UNICEF 1993) Alternatively, the social sector under communism was funded and controlled by the state with a bureaucratic system of management. Ukrainians have not been used to the system that demands receipts and requires accountability for finances and within the data there is evidence to suggest that they find it both confusing and insulting.

A participant was critical of the financial system relating to the payment of Ukrainian consultants and professionals that had been brought into the programmes. She argued that people worked for a number of days but because the funding is controlled by UNICEF's office in New York, the payment was taking a long time to come through:

"(Funding) is one of the worst difficulties we have experienced on the project. Money is always the priority, but you can't involve experienced professionals without paying them. They (UNICEF) want to see immediate results but don't want to part with the cash."

The above participant was angry that money seems always to be the priority. However, as has been stated above, one can not be clear about the extent to which money is the actual problem or whether it is about who controls the money and has the power over the finances. Certainly when the CSA took over financial control of the projects, the relationship with the UISR became tense, which would seem to suggest that the issue here is one of power and control rather than that of money per se.

There are also some issues around the notion of very diverse ways of working for people who have worked for years within a different system. Although there was much poverty in the Soviet Union before the collapse of communism, there were never the same financial demands on people as there are today. The subsidies that have been taken away by international financial institutions have seen people having to pay for services that had previously been funded by the state. The astronomic inflation that has also occurred has further reinforced the poverty of many. The consumer goods that are now freely available in Eastern Europe are difficult for many to afford and it is little wonder that people are feeling that money is the priority. It is a priority in order to take care of oneself and one's family and it is also a priority for institutions such as UNICEF to account for all the money they spend. On an organisational level, the same kind of resentment is visible. During the last years of the project, the dynamics of the relationships of the organisation changed, when the CSA took over the financial management of the programmes and it is from this point that the relationships seem to have altered, becoming more strained.

The Director of the CSA believes that this can be explained thus:

"We had a partnership before, but because we're channelling the money to them we're seen as employers and I think that's been very unhelpful within a system where financial accountability is utmost".

The issues that Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union are experiencing on an international level are concerned with the pressure to

adapt to a capitalist global economy. They are no longer a superpower, and many of the oppressions that took place in the region over the Cold War are now being exposed. Culturally, countries that were once part of the Soviet Union, who are now independent, are struggling to regain their culture and language which had been lost for almost one hundred years. On an organisational level this has caused friction between the various agencies involved with the child care programmes. The UISR has struggled to find a new place within rapidly changing government structures, and has at the same time had to deal with the Western agencies that have been brought in to help them create change. The laws of capitalism and the financial obligations have caused confusion and resentment and this has seeped into individual ways of working, where people are attempting to subvert the consultancy process through the means discussed above. In turn the British trainers have been confused by these attitudes, particularly with the silencing of participants, no doubt reinforcing the Le Carre stereotypes that people from the West even now associate with the region.

Cultural Issues

Some of the issues presented above could be said to have occurred as a result of cultural differences. Within the data there are many more instances where other differences have emerged. Advocates of social action argue that it is a process that is entirely culturally transferable, however the data presents a series of difficulties that seem to point towards the fact that it is far more complex.

Within a training session there are certain filters through which all information passes. An individual will have their own set of values and beliefs through which they will see the world. These will be based within both professional and personal experience and will affect the actions of the individual and the ways in which they react to different situations. Within the same culture, when there is a clash of values, it is often difficult to understand opposing beliefs, and when one is working within an entirely different culture, one could suggest that it is infinitely more difficult. The data presents some very important examples of this.

One of the British trainers was an experienced child protection social worker and her interview reflected clearly some of the professional beliefs

and values that she took to her work in Ukraine. In the UK over a period of two or three decades, there have been a number of scandals involving both child abuse in children's homes and alleged mismanagement of cases by social workers. As a result of these instances, legislation changed in order that the child could be protected as much as possible from any form of abuse. Child protection issues are also very much integral to professional training courses. As a result of complaints made by children and adults who have experienced abuse during their childhood, it has generally become inappropriate for social workers to have physical contact with the children they work with.

The social worker mentioned above described a session that she was conducting with Ukrainian social workers who would introduce the first fostering system in Ukraine. With a colleague she was enacting a role play. She was taking the role of social worker and the other trainer took the role of the child. Essentially, the social worker was preparing the 'child' for foster care. In her role, the social worker offered the 'child' a drink and began a discussion around living with a family. At the end of the role-play the feed back from participants was extremely critical. The trainer explains:

"The residential workers thought I was being very cold because I didn't hug the child. (My colleague) kept saying, 'I don't want her to hug me, I'd be upset if she hugs me!' It's different ideas of good practice, all that touchy huggy stuff."

She then went on to explain about the reasons for feeling uncomfortable with the overt need for affection of the Ukrainian participants:

"The rules in England are there – that's the rule you don't touch the child."

There are questions here about the nature of 'good practice' and the extent to which this is culturally transferable. The Convention on the Rights of the Child is the only piece of international legislation that protects the rights of children. Whilst it lays down their basic rights, it by no means addresses professional values, nor does it recommend social services policies globally should reflect its aims. The fact remains that British law and professional values are based upon notions that to hug a child lays one open to

accusations of abuse, or at least creates an environment where it is more likely to occur.

The British trainer obviously feels that to demonstrate physical affection towards children is inappropriate. However if the residential workers in Ukraine feel that displaying affection with children is important, is it appropriate to challenge this notion, or can the social worker place aside her beliefs and allow the Ukrainian social workers to treat the children as they see fit, based upon their own values and beliefs in terms of child care, and without the influence of a series of abuse scandals and subsequent legislation which has eventually filtered into the professional values of Western social workers.

One of the trainers interviewed argued that no matter how hard one tries – one is always perceived as the expert in Eastern Europe. The majority of the trainers interviewed agreed to some extent, and spoke of the fact that Ukrainians were always keen to discover how social work with children was organised in the UK. If British trainers are perceived as experts and social care in the UK superior, the Ukrainian participants may well take what is said very seriously in terms of changes within their own practice.

To return to the role play, the British trainer who was the 'child' said in role, *"I don't want her to hug me, if she hugged me I would be upset."* This could be seen to be as an imposition of his own values upon the group. The trainer was probably not aware of what he was doing, but one could suggest that his personal and professional values were so ingrained, that they filtered into training sessions.

In terms of the social action training, British trainers have stated above that they feel that social action merely prescribes the process, the content being led by the participants. However it would certainly seem in this case that personal and professional values always seem to trickle into the content. Rahnema (1992) in Blackburn (2000:11) maintains that this subtle imposition is one of the drawbacks of Paulo Freire's methods, on which social action is based. He argues that:

"External activists who adopt Friere's ideas suffer from an inherent tendency to manoeuvre and manipulate (the oppressed) and to impose on them their own ideological frameworks and definitions of the aims of the struggle." (Rahnema in Blackburn 2001:11

Within the observation notes there is another instance of where personal values filtered into the training. During a training session, a discussion arose concerning deinstitutionalising residential care. The group was asked about basic ways in which children's lives could be made more family-like. One of the participants, who was a psychologist, had been reading about using relaxation techniques with children in care as a way of relieving stress and shared this with the group. The trainer told her very abruptly that this was, *"Absolutely not a priority."* The response itself and the way in which it was delivered would certainly seem to suggest that the trainer felt quite strongly about what he perceived as the main concerns in terms of deinstitutionalising children. In this way the principles of the social action method, which allows people to address their own problems based upon their skills and experience, was not adhered to, rather the trainer in question was once again allowing her agenda to seep into the session, based upon Western experience of residential care and individual priorities.

Residential care for children, and any form of institutionalisation in the Former Soviet Union, included much use of psychology, whereas in England it is based more upon social models of child care. Whilst we may not agree that a psychological approach to child care is appropriate, it is nevertheless what practitioners in Ukraine have been used to for many years. Within these two examples there would seem to be two kinds of conflict. The first is professional based upon certain beliefs and values that underpin social work in many Western countries. The second would seem to be cultural whereby, there is a lack of understanding of the history and culture of Ukraine and the structures within which Ukrainian practitioners have had to work. In terms of social action, which claims to be a structure within which people are asked to place their own content and reach solutions by themselves, it would seem that no matter how committed people are to this way of working, personal and professional beliefs will often filter down into the training.

Nimmagadda and Cowger (1999: 263) suggest that Western social work methods have been imposed upon countries of the developing world. They go on to argue that when this imposition occurs, confusion and conflict is caused through what may be unsuitable practices for the culture in question. They maintain that all social work practice models are:

"Laden with cultural values, norms, assumptions, attitudes, and linguistic habits and beliefs, implicit and explicit, rational and irrational formalised and intuitive."

Social action as a method and as a process claims not to impose, rather it perceives itself to be a model that allows people to develop solutions based upon their own experiences and understanding. However much social action workers attempt to operate in this way, it would seem that there are certain elements of the above that seep into the training. However Nimmagadda and Cowger (1999) also suggest that whilst social workers must admit that their work is very much based on Western values and beliefs, social workers in developing countries tend to adapt any knowledge gained to their own specific values and culture. They also argue that the information or knowledge that is offered by Western social work practitioners cannot be grounded within the reality of the recipient social workers and that further explorations of how social work methods are indigenised should be promoted and encouraged.

Another complex issue is that of anti-oppressive practice and the extent to which it is acceptable to challenge language or attitudes that from a Western perspective are oppressive. Several of the trainers admitted to having difficulties on knowing when to confront participants, and two of the trainers who were women, felt distinctly uncomfortable in a situation where there seemed to be sexist attitudes.

In the situation involving these women, it was not so much the use of sexist language or overt sexist behaviour towards them, rather it was a feeling that only the male trainers were considered as important.

"It was a very male, very paternalistic week. I don't think we were treated the same at meetings – I don't think that we were given much importance."

Within the field notes there are other examples of what appears to be sexist behaviour. During a meal with three British trainers (one man and two women) and a Ukrainian representative from the UISR (a man), the men dominated the conversation and the British women were rather excluded.

Also in terms of sexist behaviour, one of the male trainers described a training situation where the group was made up predominantly of women with only three men. The trainer ensured that when the participants went into small groups, one man went into each of the groups. The trainer continues:

"There are three groups and three presentations, and three guys get up to do them! You don't feel necessarily comfortable saying, 'how about a woman doing the next one?' You don't know if that's the way things are – the rules over there."

This particular trainer went on to discuss cross-cultural challenge in general and seemed to conclude that for a number of reasons it was simply not appropriate to challenge in the same way that it would be within a Western situation, and he was very clear about his reasons for this:

"There are all sorts of things that you just have to let go ... you have to sort of accept that it's their stuff, they're the ones who live here and it's their deal. You have to sort of say well this is none of our business – we don't get it, we don't understand it and I think that you have to be fairly brutal in batting away your hobby horses."

He goes on to discuss the fact that within the social action method, it is the group that are important and they are the ones who will make the decisions based upon their own experiences, culture and situation. The trainer may not agree and may ask the group to expand and explore a certain issue, but finally the group will decide upon its own direction and the trainer must let them.

This trainer also goes on to discuss a situation where he did allow his own feelings to come to the surface:

"It was a comment made about the fact that you can't work with gypsies because they are thieves. I really wish that I hadn't challenged on the spot – but it was so blatant. I wish I'd found the appropriate moment for them to discuss it themselves in the training because that's what I would normally do. I think I was stupid to stand up and say, 'We're not having that in this training group' and

I just felt a bit of a twat really . . . if it's stuff that you don't understand it's your problem."

This trainer concluded by saying that there are moments where trainers will feel very uncomfortable with what in the West would be offensive language. He goes on to suggest that debriefing amongst the trainers is important for this very reason. Outside the group and with other like-minded people, one can find support. Through his experience above, this trainer concluded that not being Ukrainian, he did not have the same rights of challenge as he had in the UK.

There have been various instances during the process of the research, where anti-oppressive issues have emerged and there are no easy answers. As social workers and community workers, many of the trainers have deeply held beliefs about inequality. One of the principles of social action is committed to the challenge of prejudice in whatever form it takes. One of the trainers was particularly convinced that trusting in the process is key to challenging within a cross-cultural context, with importance placed on asking 'why'.

During one of the training sessions around disability, one of the trainers was a disabled man. On the first day of the course there were some potentially very offensive statements made about disability and the rights of disabled people even to live. The disabled man felt extremely vulnerable in this situation and obviously hurt by the comments that were made. Although the co-trainer was confident in the process of social action there are questions around the extent to which the disabled trainer was damaged by these comments. Whilst he had made a decision for himself to train on these courses, he admitted that he had not known that attitudes to disability would be as medicalised and as offensive as he found them to be. There are questions here concerning the extent to which the disabled trainer was prepared for the attitudes that he might face, and the support that he could receive subsequently. To trust solely in the process to deal with issues of oppression would seem to be risky, for whilst the training group takes priority, there are certain ways in which the trainers also have rights in the situation.

The difficulty of cross-cultural challenge lies within the fact that different societies and cultures are at different levels politically, historically, culturally and economically. To take capitalism as an example: in the West Capitalism is very much developed as a system. Eastern Europe has been used to an immediate history of a centrally planned economy. It is only beginning to adopt the systems that have been used in the West for so long. What has for Western countries evolved over many years, has now been imposed upon Eastern and central European countries in a decade.

In the same way, Western definitions of inequality are based upon a very particular historical experiences. Language and attitudes have changed over the years as a result of many different factors. Western civil society contains groups that over a period of a century have changed attitudes to inequality and issues of oppression. The black movement can be traced back to slavery, where as a result of various campaigns, people slowly came to believe that it was unjust. The civil rights movements that occurred during the 1960s further changed the status of black people and perceptions of race. In the same way, at the beginning of the last century, women were not allowed to vote or be as visible as men in the public domain. The Suffragette movement was successful in challenging these laws and eventually changing them. Since then, women's rights have come further forward and attitudes today are very different to attitudes during the early 1900s.

Societal changes in attitude and belief have been part of a process which have led to outcomes that now view certain language and attitudes as deeply oppressive. Western society has reached this level through a century long process which is still ongoing. In terms of attitudes to inequality, societies will move at a very different pace and the Soviet Union is a clear example of this.

Whilst change has occurred as a result of the work of campaign groups in the UK and much of the Western world, the Soviet Union did not have a structure of these kinds of organisations for almost a century. Values and beliefs were imposed by a centralised government that was committed to communist ideology. If that ideology was challenged by either a group or individual, the consequences could be very severe indeed. The campaign

groups in the West that have achieved substantial change in terms of changing oppressive attitudes, were simply unheard of in the Soviet Union and much of Eastern Europe.

Ziatndinov and Grigoriev (1994) also recognise the non-existence of 'civil society' as being a barrier in terms of issues of inequality, they speak predominantly about race and the new found sense of national identity visible in many of the former Soviet States:

"The resolution of the national question" during a process of transition from a totalitarian to a democratic society, is not only complex but has major implications both for those within the borders of former member states and for those outside them."

They continue to suggest that there are marked differences in the ways in which Russians perceive the notion of race. Debates around religious observance, linguistic autonomy and areas of settlement are important within an Eastern European context whilst in the United Kingdom and other areas of the Western world many of the current race debates are centred around Black and Asian issues or asylum seekers and refugees.

If we see changes of attitude as a process, which over time challenges inequality and oppression, it seems clear that Russian and Ukrainian people will be at a different point in that process than Western people. Returning to the issue of cross-cultural challenge then, the question must be asked of the extent to which challenge is fair, based upon the fact that attitudes and beliefs of people are at a different stage within the process.

One of the British trainers talks of international human rights as a basis from which to challenge:

"It's got to be helpful across the whole world - the basic charities for human rights, it's not changeable or negotiable in whatever country you go to. Rights are rights across the whole world."

There are international bodies which promote and enforce human rights on a global scale. The United Nations and its agencies promote equality of opportunity and the protection of human rights. However as (Niuwenhuys 1998) argues, most of these organisations, their treaties and their laws are written from what could be seen to be a very Western perspective. They are also based upon challenge on a structural level and deal mainly with

governments as can be seen from interventions in places such as Kosovo. On an individual level, within a training group it is personal challenge that will occur and as has been observed from the training session, this kind of challenge requires extra sensitivity.

Cross-cultural challenge, then, presents some serious dilemmas. On the one hand if it had not occurred during the last century, South Africa would still be governed by apartheid and the conflicts in the Balkans and Kosovo would be continuing with, no doubt, far more bloodshed. However, in the light of the fact that major international laws which govern human rights are based on Western perspectives, the question must be asked as to the extent to which any form of international challenge is entirely appropriate. The United Nations, as stated above, uses a baseline for human rights that is very much rooted within Western perspectives. It dictates to the rest of the world (particularly the developing world) what is acceptable and what is not. For example (Niuwenhuys 1998) states that in some countries the idea of child labour is acceptable based upon a particular social history - the Convention on the Rights of the Child, however, would deem this unacceptable and in contravention of a child's human rights. To use a Western criteria to make judgments about the values and practices of another culture seems to be far too simplistic, for these criticisms will be based upon perspectives that cannot possibly appreciate the social and psychological make up of people that are so different.

On an individual level, as presented above, there will be instances where there will be comments made, that for a Western person will be offensive in nature. One of the trainers interviewed stated that in instances such as these he would simply ask the question, "*Why do you feel that way?*" and would develop the conversation based upon asking questions, and attempting not to impose his own agenda but to enable the participant to develop their own understanding. To offer a very abrupt challenge based upon deeply held, very personal beliefs could be damaging. When the above trainer challenged a participant over his views on gypsies, one cannot know the extent to which he was hurt by the remark and how this impacted on him for the rest of the training.

It would certainly seem that when training within a different culture, one should be aware from the outset that there will be views and attitudes that will arise that may clash with that of the trainer. From the data it seems that trainers were unprepared to challenge appropriately. It is unfair to expect people to shift their value bases over night based on the views of British trainers, rather those trainers should have more of an acceptance that they will encounter views that are different from their own. A commitment to anti-oppressive practice is an integral characteristic of the social action worker, however as stated previously a commitment to anti-oppressive practice does not necessarily mean sensitivity when working within a cross-cultural context. It also does not mean an understanding of the fact that change is relative and that Ukrainians are at a different phase of the process. To attempt to drag them into what is essentially a Western process is insensitive, rather trainers must allow participants to explore for themselves these issues within their own context.

To challenge others in what is known as a 'less developed' country also reinforces traditional notions of development, whereby a country must be brought up to Western standards because only these are deemed worthy and right. The roots of modern development can be traced back to Christian missionaries who prepared the way for invading Western armies, and if trainers seek to challenge Ukrainians and to bring them around to their way of thinking, they are attempting to do the same as the early missionaries with a 'religion' that is based on Western perspectives of inequality and anti-oppressive practice.

Language and Interpretation

All of the training sessions that have taken place in Ukraine have used interpreters. None of the trainers spoke sufficient Russian or Ukrainian to be able to conduct the sessions in the language of the participants and as such interpreters formed an integral part of the training process.

On the surface, the act of interpretation seems simple enough. Words are communicated by one person, they are then translated by the interpreter to the group and vice versa. However, from observations conducted concerning the process of interpretation and within interviews with British trainers, there is evidence that the act of interpreting is infinitely more

complex and can affect the training process in both positive and negative ways.

Trainers spoke of interpreters in two different ways. In the first instance they talked about the qualities they should have and the kind of people they should ideally be. This also included some discussion around what kind of person makes a less effective interpreter. Trainers then went on to speak of the process of interpretation, including issues around non-verbal communication and the ways in which using interpreters could impact upon training sessions.

The Interpreter as an Individual

Whilst coding the data concerning language and interpretation, the researcher simply used 'positive' aspects of working with interpreters and 'negative'. However on closer inspection it became apparent that within the data the trainers spoke of their experiences of interpreters on two levels. Firstly they spoke of the characteristics of the interpreter and the kind of qualities they should have and secondly they spoke of the actual process of using interpreters within the training and the impact of working in two different languages.

Most of the trainers agreed that the personality of the interpreter was crucial to the success of a training session. Although interpreters are not group work or training specialists, it seems that they should have a certain amount of the skills that are important in such work. One of the trainers stated that confidence was crucial. There are instances where trainers must bring the group to order after either a break or a small group discussion, and in some instances this took time because certain interpreters were rather reserved and did not have sufficient confidence to raise their voice in a room full of people.

"It's having the confidence to talk like a trainer. You want the interpreter to say 'Quiet now' but some people say it very quietly. The quiet ones are not good - one couldn't shut people up and when she took over, the whole thing fell apart. She just couldn't do it."

The best interpreters seem to be able to engage with the group as part of the training team. They can convey the enthusiasm of the trainer and can help to keep the group moving and motivated. Another trainer explains:

"They almost have to mimic you – to get the tone of your voice, the way you're saying things."

As well as being confident and skilled in terms of working with groups, there are also fairly personal characteristics that are important for the interpreter to possess. One of the trainers maintained that an interpreter should be able to convey translations of language without loading it with their own beliefs or opinions. They might have excellent language skills but may allow their own personal opinions to filter into a translation. There are examples of this occurring within the observation notes of some of the training sessions. On one occasion there was a group discussion around childhood. One of the participants made a comment about discipline and the interpreter made it very clear that she did not agree, one cannot know whether it was obvious within the translation that she disagreed, but her facial expression and the fact that she looked at the participant with rather a sneer, were clear signs of her disapproval. In this situation, not only could the actual translation have been doctored based on the fact that the interpreter did not agree, but there are also issues around the safety of the participants on the course. If the interpreter is reacting to some of the sensitive issues discussed by groups, the question arises as to the extent to which people will hold back information, for fear of being judged.

It would certainly seem that the interpreter has much power within a group: The power to reconstruct what is being conveyed and to influence the content of the training being delivered, either through omission or deliberately altering what is being said. There are also issues around the interpreter as spy and the extent to which people in the group were concerned about what to say for fear it be reported back to the UISR. During the Soviet era, interpreters did not simply interpret for foreigners, they also had a responsibility to report back information if anything either party said was derogatory of communism or simply because it was useful information.

The above situation, where the interpreter reacted to the input of the training, demonstrates the power of the interpreter to potentially affect the input of the group. One of the other trainers provides another example of where interpreters can affect the process of group work. He was working

with a group of Russian social workers and the interpreter was both very skilled and very interested in the process of social action. At some points during various activities, she began to offer her own explanations to the group:

"She wanted to explain different things to people and I hadn't got a clue where she had the potential of taking things. She wanted to get the group moving quicker because she'd got the gist of what we were doing and where we were coming from."

It would seem from the data that there is a fine line between enthusiasm for the subject matter and affecting the content of the course but trainers all admitted that the best interpreters are enthusiastic about the subject matter of the courses:

"The ones that I've most enjoyed working with are the ones who take an interest in the subject ... the ones that have really assisted the training have got a real interest in social work or social justice or those sort of issues."

"One of the best interpreters we had was a social work student who was really into what we were doing – really like another trainer, she was brilliant."

Alternatively there were other interpreters used who were cynical about the work that was going on. In the same way that enthusiasm is infectious and has a positive effect upon the group, a cynical attitude may very well have the same effect but in an altogether negative way. The difficulty is that if one does not know the Russian or Ukrainian language, one can never really know the messages that are being conveyed through translation – the trainer must simply trust that the interpreter is translating as closely as possible.

The trainers are clear that the interpreters are an integral part of the training team. Often they can be used to help de-brief the day and offer a sense of how the group is progressing. They can also be a useful barometer concerning general group atmosphere.

It would seem then that the 'good' interpreter has two distinct characteristics: They should be confident within a group situation, they should be interested enough in the subject to be able to convey enthusiasm but must also be able to separate themselves from the subject matter in order that their own values and opinions are not imposed upon the group.

The Process of Interpretation

It is essential that interpreters have very good language skills for it is clear from the data that when they do not, there is potential for a great deal of frustration and misunderstanding. British trainers offer many examples of where the interpreter either does not have the language ability to be able to work effectively, or where their lack of understanding of interpretation results in splintered feed back from participants.

In terms of inadequate language skills, one of the trainers spoke of a situation where the interpreter was very poor and the impact that this had on the group:

“Her language was so limited, I think that she could probably just translate very basic things like ‘this is milk, this is coffee. ’ That really caused problems, so much so that one of the participants who spoke English had to jump in several times and you could see the group thinking, ‘Oh – so that’s what she’s been on about. ’ You could see the irritation and frustration growing. Sometimes we’d get completely different answers to the questions we asked – it was very, very confusing.”

Trainers soon learned some fundamental lessons concerning work with interpreters. One of the trainers stated that it was his experience with poor interpreters that made him ask groups and the interpreters how the session was going, at regular intervals, in order that he could be confident that people were following the process and the discussions within it.

Alongside the language difficulties trainers also discussed certain aspects of the work of less experienced interpreters, who, whilst their English language was very good, did not seem to understand the basics of interpretation. Many of the trainers recounted instances where they had received inadequate feedback from the interpreter in terms of the length of time a participant had been talking. This often meant coaxing the interpreter to expand on what had been said.

Similarly some of the trainers were frustrated when the interpreter translated the summary of a list or activity and ended the list with, “and so on” or “et cetera, et cetera”. It was unclear as to whether the participants had used these terms or whether the interpreter had decided for him or herself that the

trainers would not be interested, or did not need to have the rest of the list translated.

There are other ways in which interpreters summarised what a participant had said. One of the trainers described a situation within a training session where a point was made by one of the participants. Another member of the group obviously disagreed and put forward her view. At the end of rather a long sentence the interpreter simply said, "She argues." In this situation the trainers become frustrated because they have to spend time coaxing the interpreter to translate all of what has been said.

From the field and observation notes there are examples of how the context of a situation or activity can be completely lost due to the interpreters not translating the entirety of what is being discussed by participants. One of the clearest examples of these was during a role play concerning the difficulties of residential care from various perspectives. One of the participants was asked to take the role of a children's home director from a rural area. Just after he had started talking, the group were helpless with laughter but the interpreter's translation was as follows:

"We have no heating, and no toys for the children, there is a shortage of food and all of the money goes to the homes in Kyiv. I don't know what to do."

Obviously in this sense it is very difficult to understand what was so hilarious about what seem very serious problems. Another interpreter was sitting close by and the researcher was able to ask him what it was that was so funny. It transpired that the participant was talking in a very pronounced regional accent, and that he was using very obscene language. The group members were all enjoying his very amusing portrayal of a rough rural stereotype.

The interpreter for the session was a very young woman, who was not terribly skilled in English. She was either too embarrassed to translate exactly what was being said, or she did not know the appropriate obscenities in English. Either way, the humour was completely lost on the English trainers. Whilst the role play was not a crucial element of the session, it does serve as a very good example of how interpretation does not simply involve language. Had the participant not used obscenities, the fact that he

was using an unusual dialect would probably still have been amusing to the other members of the group – dialect however is completely untranslatable. Also there are issues around cultural history. The peasant workers were traditionally the proletariat and held up for example to the rest of the population. The man playing the manager and the group may have been using the role play in order to ridicule that which they were told for so long was admirable. The interpreter has the difficult task of not simply swapping words in and out of English and Ukrainian, but also of trying to convey meaning, humour and tone with words that may not exist in either language.

There are many words within English that are relatively unheard of. For example within the Russian language the concepts of empowerment, commitment, participation are very difficult to translate (field notes). When training on issues around social work these words tend to crop up quite frequently and the British trainers admitted that when using interpreters they have to be very careful of the kind of language they use:

"You have to abandon all the short hand that you have when training in England. The system and the jargon that goes with it – you find yourself saying things that you'd never dream of saying in England."

Not only can words be difficult to translate but within the data there are some examples of where a word has very different meanings in Russian to what is the accepted definition in English. 'Supervision' is one such word. In Russian and Ukrainian it means being watched and has very sinister overtones. There could very well be other words that have such differences in meaning and it takes a very skilled interpreter to be able to translate words in the correct context within either language.

The interpreter interviewed by Mendelson (1990:4) also discussed the use of technical terms and how he deals with gaps in language or understanding:

"Cultural gaps are exacerbated when it comes to technical and financial terms. He has to know how much each side doesn't know so that he can make things clear. The Soviet Union for example has no concept for depreciation, so (the interpreter) must explain that and other concepts fundamental to a market economy before negotiations can continue."

From the field notes it is clear that the British trainers were very effective at introducing unusual words to interpreters. Also at the end of the session, some of the trainers de-briefed with the interpreter and prepared them for the next day in terms of the kind of language or new concepts they would be using.

With such complexities involved within the interpretation process, it would seem that for accurate translation, only very experienced and professional interpreters should be used. Within the training courses there were only two or three of these used, with the others being English teachers or even students.

The trainers have said themselves that the quality of interpretation was often very poor, and this leads to questions concerning the amount of funding that was set aside for language and whether this was sufficient. Whilst the trainers stated that in the main the interpreters were adequate, the fact remains that the work was much easier when professional interpreters were used.

Change

The aim of the training was to deinstitutionalise state child care in Ukraine and to introduce a pilot system of fostering and adoption, and it is clear that since the initial training many aims have been met. Emerging from the data are some very specific issues around change on a number of different levels.

In the first instance trainers spoke of change that had occurred and their surprise that it had taken place in such a short space of time. They also spoke of changes in individual people's practice and how participants were keen to use social action methods with children and young people. Trainers also discussed the barriers to change that they have experienced. These include wider contextual issues such as legislation and economic climate and factors such as the structure of the courses and the fact that the trainers themselves did not have on-going association with the various groups, but only stayed for one week at a time, they were therefore not able to offer continuous assistance as participants attempted to fulfil the action plans they had created on the courses.

Many of the trainers spoke of their surprise at the speed with which change has occurred and this seems to be as a result of experiences of change in the UK. They recognised the fact that fostering and adoption and residential care have developed in the UK over a period of decades, and that to introduce a pilot system of fostering in a country where it has never occurred before is a real achievement, considering the time scale of just three years. Some of them also alluded to their experience of social services departments and the fact that any changes that are made, whether at local or national level, take a long time to become a part of everyday practice. One of the trainers was particularly vocal about this:

"I think what impressed me is how the process empowered them and how incredibly quickly they got their stuff together. What they've achieved! From very small things to major changes. I think their achievements are enormous within a very short space of time."

Several trainers were worried at the outset about what they could achieve given the time span, some were even sceptical as to what was really achievable. Often these feelings of doubt were reinforced when different people were sent to the training courses. However, this did not seem to impact upon the changes that occurred, and it would seem that the more different people attended the training, the more the home was likely to change. This was particularly so of the residential group -one of the trainers maintains that if there is a core group within the wider group that have attended all of the training sessions, it does not have much of an impact on the change that has occurred in that the people returning each time represent the same institutions and are able to feed back the information to their colleagues:

"It hasn't always been the same group, but there have been a few people who have stuck with us and when you've had the same participants I think that you can see lots of changes in their practice and quite amazing changes in terms of breaking down into units in children's homes and consulting with children more - trying to make it more of a family."

In terms of the weeks of training that occurred, some of the trainers discussed the fact that they were able to perceive change within days of people attending. From the data it would seem that the process of social action training gave people the enthusiasm to believe that they could create

change. As was mentioned above, the social action approach recognises that people have skills and experience that they can use to find their own solutions to problems. The exercises that social action trainers use, are specifically tailored in order that people can name their problem and then can begin to find solutions based upon what they have, in terms of themselves and physical resources. Once they have the confidence in themselves and understand that they can create change, their motivation and enthusiasm increases. One of the trainers talks of his experiences on a course around working with disabled people:

"Using the social action model, it went from almost two days of people asking each other: 'What's going on?' and 'what's this about?' and by the end of the week people were setting plans for International Disabled Day celebrations and requesting ramps to be put in Red Square and disabled access to different parts of the city."

There seem to be some issues here concerning changes in the ways in which people have been used to working. From a conversation recorded in field notes it would seem that under Soviet administrations, there were rules that governed every aspect of life and people were generally told what to do, there was no sense of having any individual responsibility because a collective ideology had been part of people's psychology for so long. This could also be said of the Soviet educational style where a banking system existed where the teacher and the books contained the information and that information would have to be learned for examinations. Students were not given the opportunity to question what they were taking in and for subjects such as Marxism, discussion was even dangerous.

Social action then, must have seemed very unusual for people and it was not surprising that they were asking questions such as "What's going on." However when given an environment within which to discuss ideas and solutions, people seemed to respond very well indeed. One of the trainers explains further:

"The didactic system denies everyone's experience. It assumes that you are an empty vessel to be filled with knowledge. They were fed up with men in suits standing in front of rows of chairs and telling them what to do. So the mere fact of sticking people in a circle and not lecturing, by asking a series of questions within which they can paint a picture - was liberating. It was exciting people and they openly embraced it."

Within the field notes and the interview data there is plenty of evidence to suggest that change has occurred within people's individual style of working. Many people have used the activities that they were introduced to on the courses in their work with children and young people. One of the participants used a picture game with a group of young disabled people in order that they could talk about their disabilities and she gave some very positive feed back about how this had worked.

As well as individual change there has also been some major structural changes, the most important of which is the introduction of fostering and adoption. Before the training began there was no word in Ukrainian for fostering and people were unfamiliar with the concept. Three years on after publicity campaigns and changes in legislation there are now national social policies in place which support a system of fostering and adoption and the first children have been successfully placed in foster families.

Most of the trainers were very pleased with the outcomes in terms of fostering, but they did have some reservations about the sustainability of the programmes which are dependent upon some external factors that are beyond their control. One trainer spoke of her concerns in terms of the political and economic climate in Ukraine:

"The situation with UNICEF and the political situation is so unstable that I'm very worried about what is going to happen in terms of change. I think they might be setting up structures that there's not the proper structures to support them. It's quite worrying to think what will happen when all these children come out of the internats. It's such a big percentage of the population that I really feel that UNICEF should put more money into it."

One of the trainers was also concerned that the programmes had an experimental element to them and was also worried about the levels of funding involved:

"A fostering system can't work as a pilot. We're doing something very tricky here- we're actually going through a process to create a nation-wide system that for a year will be a pilot project, but which must continue after that. If it doesn't continue after that, then it's actually damaging - it's a failed pilot project and it's actually really fucked up some kids."

There also seem to be some issues here around the nature of pilot projects. Often a pilot project is initiated in order to persuade management or government bodies that it can work, in order to receive more support and funding. In this way much work will go into a pilot project and there is a danger that it can operate in an unrealistic way. For something to be really tested, it must surely work within normal conditions over a period of time, and not given very special attention for a limited period.

Funding as a barrier to change was an important issue for most of the trainers. The size of the problem and the numbers of children in care was overwhelming and whilst there were some real steps forward in terms of deinstitutionalising child care and the introduction of pilot fostering, the trainers felt that the problems would take a considerable amount of time and funding to put right.

One of the trainers was concerned about follow up, and argued that the training sessions simply weren't enough. She felt that in two weeks there were severe limitations in terms of what could be achieved:

"If you don't have someone there working with people and supporting them in that space and environment and being able to follow it up and deal with the issues that come up and identifying training needs – I mean I can't believe that two week's training has trained people to be adequate, safe, street workers. ."

Ukrainian Participants

Expectations

Ukrainian participants interviewed were not sure what to expect in terms of the training. For many it had been their first experience of an international partnership and many were simply prepared for a series of sessions that they felt would be similar to other training they had attended, but with the use of interpreters.

From the field notes and the data, it would certainly seem that people were expecting training in its most traditional sense. On the very first day, all the chairs were set out in classroom style, in rows and the first thing the trainers did was to put the chairs into a circle. From facial expressions, participants

obviously found this somewhat unusual. When asked about expectations, one participant seemed to summarise rather well the lack of expectation:

"Few people had any expectations concerning the training. Some people knew about the topic of the training and only a few ideas of what they might do after it."

In terms of course content, a few participants thought that they would simply be taught about fostering and adoption in England and were expecting to be told how to implement a similar system in Ukraine. When they realised that this would not be the case, some of them felt disappointed. It would seem from the data that this disappointment comes from previous educational experiences. In Ukraine, didactic methods are used in schools and universities. Participants were expecting this method to be used in the training because that had been their only experience. They were disappointed because they were expecting to be given the answers to their questions and to be told what to do. When they were faced with a style of teaching with which they were unfamiliar, they were further confused.

In order to understand Ukrainian training methods, the researcher attended a course designed and implemented entirely by Ukrainians. The aim of the training was to enable young people to conduct a survey around youth attitudes. Almost all of the sessions were lectures either in a small or a large group. There was one role play session, but other than that participants were only given the opportunity to ask questions within the last fifteen minutes of each session. The course was predominantly based around quantitative methods and one section of the course was entirely devoted to mathematical formulas for data analysis. Based upon this experience and the knowledge that Ukrainian education had been didactic, it seems clear that this is the kind of training that participants may have been expecting.

The last section discussed issues around trainer's perceptions of the Soviet Union and how these had filtered through into their expectations. In the same way, the Ukrainians had certain perceptions of the West, although these were far less formed due to the fact that various communist governments felt that if young people were exposed to Western influences they would reject communist ideology and would not carry forward the socialist ideal. During the 1960s, the Beatles were officially illegal and

there were severe penalties for anybody caught dabbling in foreign currency or the import of Western goods. (Harwin 1995) It would seem that both participants and British trainers were basing their expectations around images that were inaccurate, the trainers with their thoughts of spy films and the Ukrainians with the notion that the West was the evil enemy.

From the late 1980s, people in the CIS were bombarded with Western popular culture, consumer goods and media and it seems that attitudes towards the West are based upon all that has arrived since this time. Many of the participants felt that as a result of Western influence there were many more problems in Ukraine and that life was much more difficult living in a country in transition:

"For me this time is very difficult. You have to think quicker and move quicker because of all the different problems. You have no time to relax. We have different problems now like drugs and other things. The world is crueller and only if you can adapt can you survive."

Holden et al (1998:121) also argues that Russians now see capitalism and Western influence in negative terms, compared with the hope that was so prevalent when communism collapsed at the end of the last century:

"Russians look around themselves and see an ever-soaring death rate, a sharp deterioration in their diet (and) a rise in contagious and sexually transmitted diseases ... All these terrible things are more associated with the consequences of introducing a Western style of capitalism than with the legacy of 70 years of communist rule."

People were also worried for their children and young people in general and they felt that Western influences were having a detrimental effect upon them. There seems to be the feeling that under communism, there were no distractions for young people and that now with so many changes and so much exposure to Western media, they are finding ways of expressing themselves that adults find disturbing:

"I have heard young people talking sometimes and I'm really shocked. They talk about sex, mostly swearing, and they talk about drugs, you would think that nothing else exists."

They are also concerned about young peoples' motivations in terms of study and employment. Some participants spoke of the unemployment situation and the impact that this had:

"A person who wants education must pay for it now and those who do not pay have no motivation. They sit in school and feel that even if they get a good education they won't get a job. They see the teachers selling things to make money because they are not paid enough."

One of the participants spoke of the fact that many of the problems currently being experienced in Ukraine have no precedent and people simply are not equipped to deal with them:

"In our country, everything good or bad has come very quickly, they've never experienced it before so they can't advise. All they can say is 'don't do it' and then young people do the opposite."

Once again, issues of societal processes are raised. As with issues of inequality, Western popular culture has developed slowly over a period of more than half a century. Values and attitudes changed and these are reflected within all sorts of media including film, television and literature. In the West there have been debates about censorship and about sex and violence on film and television. Organisations have been created which deal with complaints from viewers and there are various bodies that work with the media to protect the rights and the privacy of people who may be featured.

In Ukraine and in other countries in central and eastern Europe, people have been deluged with a set of images that they have been previously taught to reject and despise. Young people can now access goods that they have never been able to access before, including drugs and pornography, the latter of which is freely available on news stands and at kiosks. All those who have responsibilities towards children: parents, care workers and teachers, will not have experienced the problems that arise from all these new products and images and there are few voluntary agencies that offer support and advice around the various issues with which young people are faced. One of the participants discussed the notion of sex in films as an illustration of this:

“Western films for teenagers are more open sexually and teenagers gain knowledge about sex from these. But we don’t have enough sex education to explain things. It’s sex with no feelings and that’s bad. Young people need people to explain things to them.”

Wanner (1998) reinforces the above and describes the extent to which people (particularly young people) have embraced Western culture, in particular Western media. Through her research in Ukraine she found that under communism, there were strict uniform laws at school and makeup, jewellery and fashionable hairstyles were discouraged. Once the uniform regulations had been lifted, boys and girls are now keen to make a fashion statement. Wanner continues:

“The fetishism of material goods flourishes as each item of clothing or accessory indicates the type of connections one’s parents have, whether they have access to hard currency and the ability to travel abroad.” (1998:92)

In terms of the media, Wanner argues that what Ukrainians are receiving is an unrealistic portrayal of life in the West. She maintains that young Ukrainian people are particularly susceptible to an adherence to an “imagined community.” Where wealth and attractiveness are the most important elements.

The wealth that is so attractive to young people, sits in stark contrast to the realities of everyday life in Ukraine today. Participants interviewed were keen to talk of the stress that this placed upon the family.

“Many problems begin with families that have no money, parents work hard and don’t have time for their children and when they do they cannot tell them how to behave in this way or on that way.”

With the hard economic climate and with the influx of new social problems and Western culture it is difficult for people to see any benefits of losing the old communist system. (Wanner 1998) What is not certain from the data is the extent to which this dissatisfaction has affected people’s perceptions of Westerners. In some cases in the data there has been undertones of resentment that Ukraine needs aid. It is possible that this stems from the fact that the Soviet Union was one of the super-powers during the Cold War which brought it global status. Presently Ukrainians are in the position

where they have to seek help from the very Western society that was perceived as a threat and many of its elements forbidden.

The Ukrainian participants had expectations in terms of the nature of the courses and the individuals who would be working with them and they also had some attitudes around Western values and culture. At the end of the 1980s Soviet people were hopeful that the West would come to the aid of Russia with assistance of all kind. However, when it did come, the side-effects were unpleasant: high inflation, vast unemployment and cuts in social spending came as somewhat of a shock when expectations had been so high. (Wedel 1998).

In an earlier chapter, Wedel (1998) also mentions the fact that Eastern Europeans are often resentful of the fact that many of the consultants who have travelled to the region, do not have sufficient understanding of the situation in terms of culture, economic climate, social history and levels of poverty and from the data there are examples of this. Some people expressed their resentment around the fact that the British trainers did not understand their situation, particularly on an individual level in terms of the economic hardship that people experience in their day to day lives:

"People are very, very poor. Trainers cannot understand the situation unless they have been through it themselves. They have only their Western expectations and they base their training on their Western experience."

As is stated above, the British trainers on the whole felt that they did not need to prepare too much for training in Ukraine, rather they preferred to find out about the society and culture from those with whom they worked. The Ukrainians interviewed had different views of this and felt that trainers should be more prepared, not merely in terms of culture but also in relation to the structures within which they were working:

"It is important to have an idea of what is going on in Ukraine. Things are changing so quickly."

"They need to know about the social situation, politics, everything that effects the way people work in different situations. Our government has made it much more comfortable for Westerners who visit, but because of this they do not get an accurate picture of the reality."

“Western trainers should know something of the social and political situation. If you know more about the people who you are going to work with it’s easier to make your training effective. You don’t need to study the statistics and the data but you should know what the life of the people is, the real life of the people you’re going to work with – the difficulties they have and what they have to face every day.”

One other participant argued that trainers should have an understanding of the context within which they are training and this included knowledge of social work structures. She argued that without this knowledge misunderstandings can occur. She uses the example of some of the government departments with whom she had to work as part of the programme. Each of the Ministries that have responsibilities for children's homes also have different statistics concerning the numbers of children in care. She goes on:

“I have had to talk to 28 ministers who deal with children and very often they gave very different figures – I have had to play one off against the other and still do not have an accurate picture. It’s been a real struggle to make sense of the differences.”

This particular participant had been given deadlines by which the research should have been completed and was under pressure to produce results. However due to the lack of statistics and their variable nature, she was not able to complete on time. She went on to state that the Western organisations involved had not understood the difficulties of gaining access to accurate data and therefore placed pressures upon her to present results in what was an unreasonable amount of time.

Gilbert (1998) would seem to reinforce this aspect of the data. She found that many Eastern Europeans were resentful of the fact that consultants did not appreciate the very different and difficult circumstances in the region. From the above data it would seem that not only do Ukrainians feel that it is courtesy to know about their country, but often it is necessary to have an understanding of some of the structures that may impact on the potential changes resulting from the training.

Alongside interpretations and perceptions of Western culture and life, the data shows that Ukrainian participants had experienced a history of Soviet culture that has had an impact upon the ways in which the training courses

have been received and the subsequent changes that have transpired. The Soviet Union, and the ideology that inherent within it existed for 74 years and Wanner (1998: 73)) suggests that:

"When that ideology has informed an entire social system for 74 years, a rejection even if cogently articulated, cannot erase the fact that the ideology has already dramatically informed the thinking, values and character of those who were subject to it."

In the previous chapter, the information collected from British trainers reveals a commitment to very specific ways of working, based upon certain ideologies and professional and personal values. Similarly the Ukrainian participants revealed attitudes and ways of working that reflected their very specific cultural, social and political histories. The next section will examine their experiences of the training and will draw out some of the similarities, differences and conflicts that occurred when cross cultural training takes place.

Experiences of the Training

Understandings of Social Action

Ukrainian participants spoke of social action on several different levels. Initially they talked of their enjoyment of the actual methods used and the ways in which they had gone on to use these methods with both staff and children and young people. They went on to speak of their feelings about the social action process, the attitudes of the trainers and the atmosphere on the courses. Some of the participants also spoke about the process of social action and offered views concerning its transferability.

In terms of the actual training sessions, many of the Ukrainian participants spoke of how much they had enjoyed them and found them very useful, not merely in terms of the development of new services but also as new ways of working with young people.

"The role play games and activities were very effective, we use them here with the children now. I used to work in a different way with children – it's made me think a lot."

As well as enjoying the sessions in terms of their content and usefulness, participants spoke a lot of the atmosphere on the courses and how positive it was for them. Many of them spoke of the good humour of both Ukrainians

and British trainers and how this sparked enthusiasm. On the residential courses one participant pointed out that those who attended the training were high level managers with many pressures. The fact that they came every day and for subsequent training courses was evidence that they found the training both enjoyable and informative.

"Our group is made up of directors of children's homes. They are very busy but they are still here at the end of the training course, this obviously means that the courses are important to them."

It would certainly appear that people were expecting formal training in the style of lectures. The concept of interactive training was new for them and initially they were disappointed with this. One participant talks of the kind of training that Ukrainians have been used to:

"Some trainers will just give you lectures - you couldn't call them workshops. They give you information, figures and examples from their own situation. People here are used to having such workshops, they're used to having lectures just as they did at school or university."

Having been expecting a series of lectures participants were somewhat surprised that they had enjoyed the sessions so much. This seems to suggest that whilst they were expecting the didactic methods they were used to, they found these quite dull. Initially intimidated by change and the shock of not receiving what they were expecting, they gradually warmed to the new style of training.

"I remembered people laughing and enjoying themselves and I thought 'Jesus Christ! What's happening? People are enjoying themselves!' And they all came the next day - which was great!."

"We are working on the principle of a small family. This made us feel relaxed with each other and is probably why we used the time so well."

The trainers always began the training sessions with a game. This seemed to allow participants to get to know each other and seems to have been very important to them. This was especially true of those in the fostering and adoption group. Many participants admitted that they were intimidated by the size of the task, and certainly were not clear about the nature of fostering. The social action process, however begins with the experience of

people, recognising their skills and relating them to the problem. The field notes from the courses detail the very first training exercises that were used with the group and these began with discussing experiences of childhood and some of the positive and negative experiences associated with it. Beginning with people's own experiences the training then went on to discuss child care practice generally in the context of Ukraine.

The atmosphere within the training courses seemed to be very important to participants and they felt that the trainers were responsible for creating such a pleasant environment. One participant mentioned the notion of a 'safe' environment in which to learn. She was part of the residential child care group and felt that the participants on the course were likely to reject new ideas simply because they had been working in the same way for so long:

"Our group contained people who had been working in child care for 15 to 20 years and it's extremely difficult to tell them that some things need to change. I was confused that the trainers started the process very slowly, step by step, but later on I realised that this was the only method appropriate for residential staff, so that they do not reject new ideas straight away but giving them a chance to get into it slowly and safely."

Many people felt somewhat confused that the trainers started with what seemed like such basic concepts. Some of them felt a little patronised and felt that the trainers believed that they did not know about the basic principles of child care. A conversation with one of the participants at the beginning of the course ended thus:

"I have been doing research about childcare for 15 years and they are treating me like an undergraduate."

However during an interview with the same participant after the training course, she retracted what she had said and stated that starting with such basic concepts was essential and that she had valued this not merely in terms of the work that she did as a result of the training but also relating to her own research. She spoke particularly of the way in which trainers had asked them to recall their own childhood and the positive and negative aspects of it. She ended by stating that she had forgotten so much of how she had felt and that it was important to be able to empathise with children.

By the end of the training courses, many participants expressed their understanding of the importance of the process of social action and how through it they had developed their ideas and understanding of problems that they were faced with, in terms of transforming state child care and introducing systems of fostering and adoption. It is also clear from the data that people felt a certain ownership of this learning in that they had created solutions for themselves.

"We have gained new knowledge without feeling as though we have been forced to study. It seems that we got to where we are by ourselves but in fact we were led there by the trainers."

In the last chapter the concept of social action as a framework was discussed and it would certainly seem from the data that Ukrainians did feel that they had been through a process that allowed them to define their problem and to find solutions for themselves. One of the participants believed that one of the key elements of social action for him was the fact that it asked people to *"believe in themselves and the work that they do."*

Another of the participants also spoke of the process and how it seeks to enable people to create their own solutions. She also speaks of the confusion that people felt when they realised that they were not going to receive the kind of information and answers they had expected:

"At first they were frustrated, they did not understand what was going on, they came to the workshops to have their questions answered - and it was quite frustrating: No answers! They didn't understand that they were actually in the process of getting the answers and only at the end of the process do they realise that they developed the answers for themselves."

It would certainly seem that people eventually appreciated the social action process as a way of working. However, there are some contradictions in the data that deserve some consideration. Many of the participants maintained that they would have felt patronised had the trainers simply spoken of their experiences in the UK and told them how to create social welfare systems in Ukraine. However, they did seem to value the information that they received from the trainers about the situation in Britain. This interest is not simply about wanting to transpose systems, rather it seems to examine the

experiences of another country and to take what is appropriate for the situation in Ukraine:

"It is very interesting to find out about the experiences of Western colleagues, because our system and your system differs. It's interesting to know what you have and what we have."

"Westerners can help us with experiences from their own countries and within their own fields of knowledge. We put questions to them and they can answer our questions - their answers are valuable. We know our situation and we can listen to their answers and maybe say, 'that's not right for Ukraine' - but some of the answers are very useful. It helps us to look at things in a different way."

In the previous chapter, the British trainers stated that they were uncomfortable when participants asked them about their practice in England. The trainers perceived this to be associated with notions of Western superiority and for them was the least useful aspect of the training. However the Ukrainians interviewed maintained that the knowledge they received from trainers was extremely useful. One of the participants explains:

"Western child care systems are established and have existed for a long time within a democratic society. Here in Ukraine we have some systems but they are old fashioned and need to be changed."

With very little experience of welfare systems within democracies, the participants seemed to want information concerning all aspects of it. They recognised that the two systems were completely different but needed an example of what the situation was like in England, in order to understand what were for them very unusual concepts. For example: fostering did not exist in Ukraine before the fall of communism and there is not a word in Ukrainian or Russian for the concept. In order for people to build up a picture of the process of fostering, it seems that they needed some concrete examples. These examples could either be used, modified to fit into a Ukrainian context or completely rejected:

"Different countries have different models of working, its just not possible to copy the model in this kind of work. The trainers shared their experiences and we shared ours and it's a question of finding the middle ground."

"You can't simply transfer positive practices from one country to another. We have to adapt them so that they work here."

This issue will be further discussed within the fostering and adoption section.

The only negative comments made by participants concerning the social action method were made at the beginning of the training courses, when people were confused that they were not receiving traditional training methods. However, some comments were made concerning some of the arrangements of the courses themselves, and this data seems to reinforce some of the literature concerning consultants in Eastern Europe.

Social Interaction

Some of the participants were critical of the domestic arrangements on the course. Many came from all over the country and were accommodated in a local hostel. The consultants stayed in the centre of Kyiv in apartments let out by accommodation agencies. Participants commented on the fact it would have been better to have stayed in the same place in order that more informal discussions could have taken place:

"I think we would probably have liked to have more informal discussions and to communicate more informally. We stay here and they stay at their place, those from Kyiv stay at their homes. It would be better to have every one on the same site so that we all live together. This would have made things more interesting!."

"Living together in the same place is good. It widens your communication and it would mean communicating outside of the training. It would be nice to have the free time not just to talk about training issues but also about something else: an exchange of views, culture and language - we could all learn a lot. It strengthens relations and helps you to understand the people you work with."

Ukraine was dominated by Soviet and Russian culture during the communist era and as fellow Soviets, many cultural practices became shared. Socialising is an important aspect of life for Russians, especially it seems, when entertaining Western visitors. Through social contact Russians feel that they can get onto an equal level with their colleagues and can enjoy an atmosphere that is based upon human warmth rather than business hierarchies. Holden (1998:204) continues:

"For Russians, even in their business dealings, social distance must be obliterated, and business entertainment, smoothed with vodka, can help achieve precisely that, and quickly."

There are two other points that seem to be raised in the above quotes. The need for more informal discussions and the need to generate understanding between two cultures. On training courses in the UK, when there is no need for interpreters, social action training sessions, as experienced by the researcher, contain a very informal element. Once the workshops end, there is the opportunity for informal discussions during meals and for socialising in the evening. This seems to unite the group and also provides opportunities for networking, sharing experiences and simply supporting others who are using similar ways of working.

This did not occur on the Ukrainian training courses, and in fact, there was little opportunity for informal discussions due to the language difference. Even during coffee and lunch breaks, it was often not appropriate to ask interpreters to translate a chat. Interpreters interviewed maintained that their work was very tiring, requiring absolute concentration and the breaks were very important for them. In terms of staying all together in the evenings, the interpreter problem also arises. It does not seem fair to ask interpreters to work from early in the morning to ten or eleven at night. Apart from being exhausting work, there simply would not have been sufficient money in the budget to enable pay for 'after hours' interpretation.

The Ukrainians also felt that cultural exchange was important and that to develop better working relationships, trainers and participants alike should have an awareness of each other's cultural context. One of the participants mentioned the fact that one of the most important aspects of her life now was the fact that she could communicate freely with other nationalities. From the literature it is clear that in many countries of the Soviet Union, Western influence was non-existent and any attempt to make contact with foreigners was very much frowned upon. With this in mind it would seem that the Ukrainian participants are eager to communicate with people with whom it was forbidden for many years. They now seem to place much value on open communication and the whole training experience could be a way of expressing that new found freedom.

One of the participants illustrates this:

"It's very valuable for me to be able to communicate and to travel freely - the possibility of open and free communication - I have friends abroad and I am very happy that I am able to communicate with them freely - not only on the phone but also to travel."

The literature also suggests that Russian people are eager to learn about other cultures and countries. The prolonged isolation that they experienced have given them a real enthusiasm for learning about international issues.

Welsh and Swerdlow (1992:3) continue:

"Russians have a great thirst for information, perhaps because of their lack of access to it during the Cold War period ... The quest for knowledge is both at the root of and a result of glasnost. Russian citizens commonly stop easy-to-spot Westerners on the street to ask about Western life and lifestyles."

The literature also suggests that this thirst for knowledge of international issues has evolved out of a need to re-locate themselves on the world stage. Shlapentokh (1998:125) argues that even those who opposed the Soviet system vigorously ultimately, "acknowledged the greatness of the USSR (even if negatively) and its crucial role in the historical development of humanity." The first senior politicians of the new system attempted to design a Russian Ideal with which to replace the American dream. This suggests that the old system had to be replaced with another ideology that would fill the gap and would relocate Russia globally. When the Soviet Union broke up the identity that it had created in the world arena broke with it and:

"The feeling that the country has become an economic backwater and marginal on the world's political stage has come as quite a shock for Russians who believed in the country's special position since the fifteenth century when Moscow was proclaimed to be the 'Third Rome.'"

It seems that many lose sight of the fact that even before the Revolution of 1917, Russia was an important player on a global scale. The fact that Soviet people have lost the communist identity, coupled with the fact that the imperial era is so distant, must contribute to the desperation that is felt to create a new identity that recognises the importance of the role that Russia and the Soviet Union have played historically, politically and ideologically.

The data reflects this, in that people wanted more time to talk to the British trainers on more of a social level. The fact that interpreters cannot be employed to work through the training and into the evening is disappointing, however there are issues here concerning language learning. At the Centre for Social Action at the time when the courses were being delivered, there was no one that spoke Russian or Ukrainian to any high standard. The literature also raises this issue, in that participants on business related courses were irritated that Western consultants had not made the effort to learn even the basics of their language. (Gilbert 1998). Certainly if just one of the trainers were familiar with the basics of the Russian or Ukrainian language, this would have ensured that some informal conversations could have taken place. The next section examines some of the issues around language from the Ukrainian perspective in greater depth.

Language and Interpretation

The British trainers spoke of the personal qualities that were important for an interpreter, whilst the Ukrainians focused far more on language and understanding. The trainers were concerned that the training courses went as smoothly as possible and that basic instructions were understood and feedback clear. Also in terms of the process of the courses, they felt that the interpreter should be a confident person, able to give instructions and to be able to express both the mood and sense of the language. It would seem from the data that the Ukrainians were far more focused upon the language and more aware of the potential for mistakes to occur. For example, if something was interpreted incorrectly concerning work practices with children, the participants would be responsible for any negative consequences. In this way they were less focused on the personal traits of the interpreter and more keen to gain an exact understanding of what was actually said.

In terms of the negative aspects of interpretation, the Ukrainian participants believed that the process slowed them down and that without a language barrier there would have been more time for problem solving and consultancy. Some were frustrated at having to stop all the time to allow the interpreter to translate. They argued that this interfered with the pace of some of the discussions that they had:

"We could never get really heated, we had to keep stopping for the interpreters. Sometimes you would lose the point of what you wanted to say."

Other participants felt that having to stop for interpreters was a positive feature of the process and felt that because they had to stop continually it helped them to pause and think about what they really wanted to say:

"We needed to stop and think carefully about what we are talking about. We cannot argue because we always have to wait for the interpreter."

Understanding was mentioned by participants on several occasions and the point was also raised that there was potential for a good deal of misunderstanding. In the field notes there is an observation recorded on the first training course concerning confusion around certain terms. The trainers began talking about Children's Homes, which in English is a term that is used for residential care establishments. The Ukrainians believed that the trainers were talking about the places where children live with their families ie the homes where children live. This confusion took some time to resolve

Another example of this lies in some of the language that British trainers used which is not translatable in either Russian or Ukrainian. As has already been said, terms such as empowerment, capacity building, and even fostering, have no direct translation and as such were often difficult to convey. One participant explains:

"There are some terms that do not exist in Russian, and sometimes it's very difficult to interpret one word. For example the term youth participation is not clear in Russian. You have to add youth participation in the decision making process. In English the words and understanding are already there - you can't just say capacity-building and expect everyone to understand."

This participant went on to suggest that words and concepts such as the above should be explained to the interpreters at the beginning of every session. De-briefing should also occur in terms of checking out what had occurred in the session and any language difficulties that may have occurred. Judging from both sets of data, this practice of 'checking out' with the interpreter was indeed incorporated into the courses.

The introduction of new (Western) words in the Ukrainian language posed some difficulties for some of the participants. Currently Ukrainian people are very proud of their language and are rediscovering it along with a culture that remained hidden for so long. The frustration experienced with the introduction of new Western words seems to stem from a mistrust of certain aspects of Western culture (as discussed above.)

"There are some people who are completely against foreign words in our language. They feel that we had to speak Russian for so long and now that we can speak Ukrainian we can't, because there are words that we have to use so that we can be in the modern world."

This participant went on to state that for her it was easier to use the English terms rather than to struggle to translate it using several sentences. However the fact remains that some Ukrainians see the use of English terms almost as a pollution of their language. The courses were conducted mainly in Russian, but the fact remains that participants still feel that the use of English language words is galling. They have received so much from the West that is negative (drugs, pornography) that the final insult is that Western influence is now infiltrating the very language they use. One could suggest that in broad terms the concepts of words such as capacity building and empowerment have only slowly become part of English language, and that it could be seen as somewhat arrogant for Western trainers to expect a level of understanding from people for whom these words are fairly alien.

The only time that participants spoke of the personal attributes of the interpreter was when they discussed the level of language expertise. As stated above, many Ukrainians maintained that when the interpretation was good there was no problem, however when the interpreters were inexperienced, or did not have sufficient language skills, participants were concerned about the impact that this would have on the training.

"Sometimes the trainer can not understand the atmosphere of the group because the interpreter does not interpret everything. It's a very difficult job."

This quote seems to reinforce the point that was made in the previous section concerning the fact that interpretation is not simply about language,

but about being able to mimic intonation and sense within what is being said.

One of the participants discussed the importance of using non-verbal communication within the training sessions and the difficulties that the interpreter is interpreting the sense of the language with all its nuances and colloquialisms:

"Interpreters can't translate the colours of the English and the Russian language. It's difficult for them. We were a very lively and expressive group and we used eye contact and facial expressions. It was like a pantomime but it really helped us to communicate."

Holden (1998) maintains that the Russian language is complex and colourful and often difficult to translate. There are many similar words that can be used for the same term or concept and it seems that it is up to the interpreter to place words and phrases in context. Within the field notes, an interpreter highlights some of these difficulties:

"In Russian you don't know where a sentence is going until it is there. You sometimes have to wait until the person is finished until you know what they are saying. It makes interpreting very slow and you have to remember the beginning of the sentence. Russian grammar is very difficult!"

Altogether the Ukrainians spoke of language and interpretation far less than the British trainers. Based upon the data there may be a reason for this: the trainers were not simply working within a different language, they were also working within a completely different cultural context. The difference in style of working and culture were far more acutely felt by the British trainers, whilst the Ukrainians were 'at home' with all the usual frames of reference aside from language. For the trainers, using their own language was the only connection they had to their normal way of working and even this language was filtered through an interpreter. The fact that the Ukrainians spoke of language and understanding could be explained by the notion that they were keen to take back what they had learned to their workplace. The trainers could have focused on the personal attributes of the interpreter and the process of interpretation because they felt a certain amount of dependency on an individual to ensure that they did their job effectively. Not being familiar with the language within which one is

working, and the culture, may engender a sense of reliance on the one person who is able to make sense for one of what is going on.

Time Scales

Time scales seem to have caused much upset for participants, in terms of the pressures that both UNICEF and the CSA have placed upon the programmes. The deadlines for aspects of the work are set at intervals over the three year programme. The first foster families had to be in place and receiving children within a period of the three years, although many of the Ukrainians felt that this was unrealistic given the size of the problem and the vulnerability of the children involved.

"The project is very complicated, and there are some real ethical issues here. Some of the UNICEF staff just don't understand that to place a child into a foster family requires a huge piece of preparational work."

This quote makes a valuable point. At the outset of the training courses, fostering was a concept that was unheard of in Ukraine, to move in three years from that point to employing foster parents and placing children was an enormous undertaking, considering that Western fostering and adoption programmes have evolved over a period of decades. The UISR were under considerable pressure to place children because UNICEF wanted evidence that the programmes were working before they committed further funding.

Based on the data one could certainly suggest that UNICEF seems to be trapped in rather a difficult position. On the one hand they are committed to improving the situation of children world-wide and on the other they are under pressure to work within a capitalist environment that is finance focused. The participant quoted above continues:

"I would not like to start foster families until all the issues controlling fostering are resolved in Ukraine. But at the same time, if we want to get the finances to continue the project next year, we have to start some foster families so that UNICEF can see that the work is being done. On a personal level I'm very worried about sending children to a foster family. We work with human beings and I would not want to damage them."

There are other participants involved with the practical aspects of organising fostering that have similar concerns and spoke of how funding issues were

putting them under pressure to place children in care without appropriate preparation for both the children and their potential carers. There was also a concern that the concept of fostering was very new to Ukraine and the advertisements to attract potential carers had to be written and filmed very carefully, in order that people were not drawn to fostering for the wrong reasons:

"It would be easy to get a bunch of journalists and photographers together, show them a man, a woman and a child and say – 'look that's a foster family. Most of them are not worried about the future of the foster family and fostering in this country. If we were less responsible we could push it through really quickly, but we want to create something that will last and most importantly to protect the interests of the child.'"

One of the projects connected with the programmes was a research project that aimed to examine the nature of state child care in Ukraine and to explore the potential for fostering. Trainers from the CSA conducted two training weeks to explore research methods and to follow the research to publication. Within this section of the training there were also instances of pressure being placed on the UISR to produce results far quicker than they thought was possible. One of the participants from the UISR continues:

"High quality research takes time, ideas need to be explored and analysed. UNICEF have set up conditions where we have to present our material once a month. We can only give them the drafts of what we eventually want to produce and some of it we are not happy with. We send the drafts to the CSA in England, they review it and then UNICEF decide whether they want to pay us or not. It's the first time they've funded research in Ukraine and they don't know how to do it, or understand what it involves!"

Some of the problems associated with the research were connected with the bureaucratic style of government in Ukraine and the fact that politicians are loathe to grant access to certain information for fear that it will be used against them. There is also concerns around allowing Westerners to have access to sensitive data for fear that it will be publicised, making Ukraine vulnerable to condemnation from Western European governments. Ukrainian people are attempting to build a new national identity (Wanner 1993) and eventually want to be part of Europe rather than an ex-Soviet

state, and poor publicity concerning ineffectual social policy could possibly put back their acceptance by European countries.

It would appear from the data that there is a certain confusion in the way that UNICEF works as an organisation. Globally they are known as an organisation which protects the rights of children and the Convention on the Rights of the Child is at the heart of what they do. However, it seems that they work in an environment that is dictated by funding, and certainly for Ukraine, it does not seem to be a way that is focused on the best interests of the children. Similarly, the CSA have a principled way of working and are theoretically working within a method that espouses equality. However, they still possess a certain amount of power: they have a contract with UNICEF that they must fulfil and they are also working within financial limits. There are also laws that govern them in terms of intellectual property rights and, in terms of the research element of the programme, they also had certain control over publication.

The Centre for Social Action is a non-government organisation that uses a method that is based upon principles of equality. However, both the CSA and UNICEF work within a system that is un-equal and based upon market principles. UNICEF is accountable to the United Nations and as such has a rigid financial framework within which they must work, and the CSA belongs to an academic community that is concerned with the ownership of intellectual property. Whilst they both may espouse principles of equality, and in the case of UNICEF, commitment to the child, they seem to work within a global system that makes it difficult for them to do this, and whether they like it or not they need to work with the system and use their power in order to satisfy those who commission the work or manage their programmes.

Fostering and Adoption

Before the fall of communism, fostering and adoption did not exist in Russia or Ukraine. As has been presented in the literature review, children who could not be cared for by their parents were sent to large children's homes. As a result of this lack of knowledge, the participants wanted to discuss the system of fostering in the United Kingdom

The British trainers did not want to talk about the system of fostering in England, as they felt that this was divisive owing to differences in social work systems, culture and history. However, the participants felt that knowledge of fostering in the UK was helpful as they needed to have an example of how it worked in another country in order to be able to employ the system in Ukraine. All of the Ukrainians who raised the issue of fostering in England stated that they did not want to duplicate the British system in Ukraine but that it was, "Useful to make some comparisons ." One of the participants continues:

"Now we have discovered how fostering works in England and what we can adapt to make things work in the Ukrainian situation."

Where people have a very limited knowledge of a certain subject it would seem apparent that in order to conceptualise it, they need to have concrete examples, whether they would be appropriate to their own situation or not. The British trainers were concerned that all of the questions concerning fostering in England were asked because Ukrainian participants felt that 'West is best' and they wanted to avoid these perceptions. However, the Ukrainian participants did not seem to be asking questions for these reasons, rather it seems, they wanted to better understand the concept of fostering through learning about how it was achieved in another country.

Once again within this situation, the British trainers were controlling the content of the training courses. They were expressing their power in terms of being reluctant to give information to the participants at that stage of the process. This was not done overtly to exert their authority, rather they wanted to be empowering by asking the Ukrainians how they thought their own fostering system should be structured. However, it would seem that whilst trying so hard to be empowering, they were actually disempowering the participants who needed examples of what fostering could be in order that they could begin thinking of a system that would suit Ukraine. The whole programme, did contain study visits to the UK, which included visits to fostering and adoption initiatives that were particularly effective. Rather than simply hold back the information, the trainers could have explained to participants that information about Western practices would be forthcoming, but that it was first necessary to discover participant perceptions. Social

action begins where people are at, and as such the UK visits came later in the programme to avoid imposing on people, Western experiences of fostering and adoption when Ukrainian possibilities had not been fully explored.

It is apparent from the data that the chief concern of those responsible for creating the first fostering programmes was the lack of information concerning fostering in Ukraine. As stated above, children who could not live with their families, lived communally in large children's homes. Even before the 1917 revolution, children's homes were large institutions, similar to the types of homes that could be found in Europe at the turn of the century. Once the revolution occurred, the nature of child care was ideologised and the first Soviet administrations were enthusiastic about collective living, in that a new Soviet generation could be raised without the interference of parents who might not be educated sufficiently to pass on the new communist philosophy. (Harwin 1993)

This philosophy was reinforced throughout Soviet history, with certain administrations actually passing legislation that would make it much easier to place children in the care of the state. Social services in Russia barely existed, communism was said to be the ideal and the existence of social work would have been an acknowledgement that the system was not working, it would also have individualised problems where the Supreme Soviet was espousing collectivism.

In the light of all this, it is no surprise that Russians and Ukrainians have very little knowledge concerning fostering and the notion of an individualised approach to social work with children. This lack of information was of real concern for participants.

"I had difficulties understanding the principle of fostering. I thought it was some kind of hobby or charity, but they said that it's more like a job. My reaction was contradictory but the deeper I get into the programme, the more I see that they are right."

"We can't start with the potential foster carers because we can't tell them what it is - a job, a hobby or what? We do not want to say that it's a hobby but the law prevents us from saying it's a job. We need to prepare public opinion to accept fostering - to tell people what it is. Part of the problem is that we can't translate it into Russian!"

Many of the participants were concerned that people would want to foster children for the wrong reasons. During a conversation with one of the participants, recorded in the field notes she stated that she was anxious that people would only foster or adopt a child because they wanted to be looked after in their old age, or to have an extra worker in either the house or farm. Throughout all the interviews with those involved in the fostering training courses, a concern for the child is paramount as is the realisation that if fostering is not introduced properly, the welfare of children could be put at serious risk.

"It is easy to show something off, we could start foster families now, take the money and that's it - but we don't want to do that. To place a child in a foster family requires so much preparation if it's to be successful."

There have also been certain difficulties around legislation. First and foremost, at the beginning of the projects, there was no law that would allow for children to be fostered. Once again this seems to be a throw back from the old collectivist system in that collective child care was perceived as being superior to that of parents.

"We have analysed the legislation framework in Ukraine and about the care of children and what we see is that it's absolutely inappropriate for fostering and adoption."

"The legislation is the most important thing that hampers the project and does not allow it to develop."

Participants spoke of their fear to break existing law and whilst for them it was tempting, they felt that if fostering was to be introduced to Ukraine, they would want it to be done in a way that was legal and honest.

The bureaucracy of the government in Ukraine also created some difficulties for those attempting to implement change. There seems to be a certain unwillingness to change which could be due to several different factors. Firstly, the same system has been in place for many years and people have been working in the same way for as long. Remaining with the same laws is comfortable and does not require any risk taking. Secondly, the apathy of politicians could be based on the fact that there has been so much change and upheaval over the last decade that they are simply tired of

the demands being made upon them by Western organisations or financial institutions. Finally there is the issue of political instability. Elections are a new element in Ukrainian political life and whereas before there were no pressures in terms of tenure, currently politicians must be somewhat fearful of being voted out of office and they are therefore very careful about openly supporting the change or the introduction of new legislation.

Since the beginning of the project, the law has now been changed in order that fostering has a legal framework. The UISR have worked closely with a children's rights organisation and have developed legislation in other areas as well. Previously there was little hope of representation in court for vulnerable families, but now there are mechanisms in place through which they can receive legal assistance.

The work that has been undertaken to create systems of fostering and adoption in Ukraine, has occurred over a period of four years and the changes that have occurred during this time have been enormous. The fact that children have now been placed with carefully selected, trained foster parents, shows that the initial and on-going training has been effective.

The Ukrainians who took part in the fostering element of the training were clear that there was far more work to be done. Some of the researchers from the UISR undertook extensive research work within the children's home in order to assess the situation and the potential for fostering and adoption, and the views of the children who could potentially be fostered. During the course of this work, the researchers became more aware of the extent of the problems experienced by children living in care and many were shocked at both their life experiences and the ways in which institutionalised living had impacted upon both their physical and mental health. One of the Ukrainian participants visited many children's homes and spoke of the way in which she was moved by the situation and had a sense that the problem was so great, she felt overwhelmed and sceptical of what could be done about it given the lack of financial resources and time constraints.

There was a recognition from many people that positive change had occurred, in that fostering has become possible in Ukraine, however they also recognise the size of the problem and the fact that it is so ingrained, both in terms of the numbers of children in the institutions and within the

mind set of the general population of Ukraine, who have become used to children's homes as the only means through which children can be cared for outside of the parental home. Most of the Ukrainians interviewed recognised the fact that real, sustained change would only occur over time, but that the first pilot projects and the changes in legislation were a positive start, both in terms of the children that would benefit and the changes in public opinion that had occurred as a result of the campaigns that have taken place within the media.

Residential Care

Both the fostering and adoption groups and the residential care groups recognised that creating changes in children's institutions would be the most difficult of the two tasks. People felt that the creation of something entirely new was far easier than to change structures and attitudes that had been in place for so many years.

"The task was much more complicated than the other groups. It's much easier to talk about a new form of work that is not as complicated as this one."

The participants on the residential courses spoke of the difficulties of working within institutions that had been caring for children in the same way for many years. They argued that practice was very much ingrained and that certain ways of working would be extremely difficult to change.

On the residential training courses there were two distinct types of participants. Those who were directors or carers within children's homes, and researchers who had been commissioned to discover the nature of the problems in children's institutions. The overwhelming feeling from both of these groups was a commitment to the children they cared for and a reluctance to create any kind of change that they felt would be harmful. In addition to these feelings, the researchers had been shocked by the discoveries that they had made in the children's homes and were aware of the enormity of the task of deinstitutionalising them. Some of them gave examples of the situations of young people that they had met in the course of their research and there was a certain amount of despondency concerning the extent to which change could occur. One of them blamed the reluctance

of Directors and politicians to recognise the problem for fear of reprisals from colleagues and the general public:

"If we start saying that children under state care are badly looked after, we are blaming the Minister for Social Protection, if we say that children and families are being neglected we are saying that the Ministry for Youth works badly – it's like washing your dirty linen in public and this is not liked by many parties."

This particular participant suggested that the politicians were not ready to accept change and that whilst the training courses had been useful in terms of creating positive attitudes, actual change was difficult in reality because those that have responsibility for children's homes still have the same mentality in terms of collective care being appropriate for children. Once again, the political instability in Ukraine seems to be impacting on the change that could occur. Politicians who are new to democracy will be wary of public opinion and the extent to which it could affect their chances of re-election.

The Directors involved in the training sometimes seemed defensive of the practices in their own children's homes. They were presented with different models of working by the trainers, but rejected these because they felt that change would be harmful for the children. One Director gave an example concerning the concept of children having contact with their birth parents:

"I follow the interests of the child and not the parents. I was worried about the child's mental health so I didn't allow them to see their parents. After the course I thought about this and have still decided not to let the children see parents. I tried to allow it but the child suffered so much."

There seems to be two issues here. In the first instance the trainers gave participants an example of how in the West, children were encouraged to see their birth parents as an alternative to the 'no contact' rule and the Ukrainian director in this case was uncomfortable with changing this practice. Within the care system in the UK, this is an accepted element of practice and children and young people are positively encouraged whenever possible to remain in contact with their parents throughout their time in care. However in Ukraine, the system of care is based upon the old communist notion that collective children's homes can provide better care than the

parents. Whilst being keen to hear about Western practice, the director in this case was unsure of the effect that contact with parents would have on the children and eventually could not bring herself to risk the mental health of the child in her care.

Once again, there are wider issues here concerning the amount of time within which people have been expected to change their practices. The system of residential child care in the UK has changed and evolved over a period of many years. Legislation has been introduced that protects the rights of children in care, and public debates have taken place concerning abuse scandals which, in turn have created new ways of working. Contrastingly the Soviet Union's system of state child care remained unchanged for decades. Freedom of speech was limited and social services were almost non-existent. Within a non-democratic society the state went unchallenged and practices remained the same for long periods.

With the arrival of capitalism and democracy people were asked to change overnight and to adjust to a variety of new systems. When one has lived within a system that has been so dominated by certain ideologies, the changes that have occurred over the past decade must have been incredibly difficult to deal with. Not merely were people asked to alter their work practices, they were also asked to begin voting, to become consumers, accept high inflation, massive cuts in social spending and the withdrawal of government subsidies. It is impossible for Western people to understand how this must have impacted on the every day lives of Ukrainians and Russians. In terms of the residential child care training, the above quote from the director demonstrates the fact that change will not occur quickly and that for it to be sustainable, people need to shift their mentality from one which has been unquestioning to one which is allowed to question and to challenge. The director seriously considered the idea of allowing children to see their parents. When interviewed she became tearful when talking about individuals in her care. The practice of not allowing children contact with birth parents, had been part of her working life for a considerable amount of time and, as such, she found change in this area of working very difficult to achieve.

Other participants spoke more directly about the nature of change within the children's homes and some seemed to be a little defensive of their own practices. One participant who is a residential child care worker appeared to feel that she was being expected to make changes that she could not possibly achieve:

"I support the methods, but I don't have the possibility to change things. I was amazed when I talked to (the trainers) about the homes that they have (in England) they have such a small amount of children. They can choose what they eat, they can make food for themselves - that would be impossible to change here. We have staff who work in the kitchens and we have five hundred children! In our case we can't do anything."

There is also the issue here of comparison with Western styles of working. The above participant makes reference to the information that she has gained from the British trainers. Based upon this experience it would seem that it is difficult for participants not to compare their own working situation with that of the UK. In Eastern Europe many children's home directors feel inadequate when compared with Western standards of child care and feel somewhat embarrassed by the lack of funding and facilities in children's homes. The participants understand that collective care is not the best for children and young people, but once again they seem to feel that they are up against some extraordinary barriers and that change cannot occur as quickly as they might want, both in terms of a lack of resources and the fact that the old Soviet mentality is anxious about change.

As has been stated previously, participants were anxious to gain information about Western practices. However, in some cases, once they received the information they felt inadequate and ashamed of their own resources. The fact that the UK visits did not occur until the training was well into its second year was one way in which the CSA attempted to reduce feelings of intimidation. They understood that to bombard participants with examples of effective Western practice would have been unfair. Rather they wanted to explore with them the structures that existed in Ukraine and the realistic possibilities for change before offering them examples of best practice from the UK.

There were many who felt that change had occurred in a very positive way. Some workers who were interviewed in children's homes were unaware that any training had taken place but had noticed significant differences in their work environment and in the attitudes of staff towards children and young people. The type of change that has occurred in some of the homes can be split into three categories. Physical change, whereby dormitories have been reorganised in order that they are smaller and more family like, attitudinal change in terms of how staff treat the children either by listening to them or by involving them in decision making, and finally organisational changes, in terms of the way in which the director involves the staff and has encouraged them to work differently with the children and young people. The following quotes have been taken purposely from staff in three children's homes who had not attended the courses and had not been made aware of the plans to de-institutionalise their home.

Physical Change:

"It's changed over the past year. We did a bulk of work on repairs to the buildings and the dormitories. In the dormitories we changed the furniture, we wanted to make it more like a home - cosier."

Attitudinal Change:

"The Director has told us to give more personal time and attention to the children, to listen to their likes and dislikes, their needs and opinions."

Organisational Change:

"The Director chose a group of staff who really enjoy working with people - we all work together really well. Before, we had people who came and went but now they stay. We have different kids and some of them are really hard work but the Director selected people to come and work with the kids and not go. Its really important that they have the same teacher."

In one of the homes one of the most important changes noted by the workers was the fact that the children are now less likely to run away, which was a common problem before the training programmes began:

"In the beginning many children ran away but now they don't because we changed the system to work with them and now they don't want to run!"

The researcher was able to visit two of the children's homes that took part in the training and in both of these institutions there had been a considerable amount of change since the beginning of the courses. One of the homes had completely restructured the dormitories to make them smaller and more home like, they had also installed basic cooking and drink-making facilities and tables and chairs so that the children could sit and eat together in small groups. The Director had also restructured the groups, so that rather than children of the same age being together, the ages were mixed and the older ones encouraged to look after their younger room-mates.

The researcher also had the opportunity to talk informally with some of the young people and they described some of the changes themselves. One child spoke of the fact that previously one of the rooms had been a cleaning storage room that was also a playroom. He informed me that several months previously all the cleaning equipment had been taken out and that it was now simply a playroom.

The changes that have occurred seem to have been rooted in the training sessions. Observations of the courses record some of the discussions that participants had around the reconstruction of dormitory space and better use of the buildings. Trainers had also used role-plays to examine the importance of listening and relationship- building. The British trainers provided the participants with alternatives in terms of child care, but as well as this, participants also felt that some of the activities could be used with the young people and a few of them had used them successfully in the course of their work.

Whilst there have been many small scale changes within the children's homes, there are issues that will take considerably more time to overcome. Most of the staff interviewed in children's homes felt that whilst it was relatively easy to deinstitutionalise on a fairly small scale level, there remained very many difficulties faced by the children and young people which they felt powerless to do anything about. There was a certain amount of apathy in terms of an attitude that felt that it was all well and good to create smaller dormitories and give children a better understanding of family life, but the fact remained that the children still had to face a life after the children's home that was going to be incredibly difficult. Public opinion

towards children in care is negative and the staff had many concerns around this issue:

"They have a bad reputation. They are not bad but they are tough, hard. You can't say that people don't like them but they have a suspicious attitude towards them, People try to get rid of them and don't allow them to work. They don't want to hear them - they know that kids from homes need special attention but they don't want to give it."

"After leaving they go into an unknown world because of their way of life here. Despite all our difficulties they still receive warmth and food - outside no one cares. After they leave we can't support them - they're just out - the majority of institutions and universities don't understand and treat them badly"

"Unfortunately I think that the common public opinion is that these children are the future criminals. Other opinions are the exception ... we would like to make people understand that these children are individuals with their own story."

From the data it seems that the Ukrainian participants were very concerned about those young people who were preparing to leave care and to go into a world that is so hostile towards them. They also felt that in terms of humanitarian assistance, most of the funding went to younger children, with no consideration given to the plight of the care leavers. Some of them blamed this on both government funding and attitudes.

"We have the children up until they are 17 years old. Up to this time the children get government support - after that they have nothing - not even someone to talk to when they have a problem."

It would seem from the data that whilst the Ukrainians appreciate the changes that have occurred within the children's home, they are aware that yet more problems exist at a structural level and feel that whilst deinstitutionalisation within the homes is important, the real problems begin when the young person leaves care. Within the data there was some evidence of cynicism in terms of what could be achieved without the support of the government and a shift in public opinion.

The residential courses did not set out to restructure the system of state care, nor did they set out to re-educate the government of Ukraine or change public opinion. The objectives of the training were to begin in a small way

to re-create the atmosphere in children's institutions, in order that they were more home-like and child-centred. However, as with the fostering programmes, there are wider contextual issues that effect the morale of the staff in the children's homes and hence the changes that they are likely to implement.

As has been stated above, the system of residential child care in the UK has been created over a period of many decades and policy-makers and practitioners alike have been able to make mistakes and to learn from them. To expect Ukrainian social welfare practices to change over the period of two decades is naïve, but unfortunately in many areas of life and work, this is exactly the message that Western organisations are sending to Eastern Europe. Holden et al (1998) suggest that this is due to a lack of understanding of the psychological and structural obstacles to change that will take time to overcome. The training of residential workers and directors has begun by making small changes that will make life more comfortable for young people in care, and this is no small feat. As with all spheres of Russian society, there are changes that need to be made at national level in order that the situation for young people in care can be further improved.

One of the largest children's charities in Eastern Europe, the European Children's Trust, (ECT) believe that due to the bureaucratic nature of governments in Eastern Europe, and as a result of their suspicion of change, the only work that can be done is at a local level. ECT argue that when news of successful change filters through to government level, it cannot be ignored (Aubrey 2001). They are working to promote fostering programmes and the success of smaller children's homes through the media and maintain that slowly, public opinion will change as a result of this and people will begin to demonstrate how they feel about the situation through the ballot box.

Comparisons of the British and the Ukrainian Data

To this point the data has been analysed systematically: first exploring the views of the British trainers and secondly those of the Ukrainian participants. This section is crucial to the research as it demonstrates the

similarities and differences of how each group of people experienced the training courses.

The British trainers and the Ukrainian participants, experienced exactly the same training courses. However, whilst they were present at the same events, their views and perceptions were entirely different, reflecting their contrasting lives and experiences. The table below presents how both sets of people have diverse understandings of the world based on their cultural, political, ideological and economic backgrounds. The participants who had lived for so long in a totalitarian, communist society had certain overall views about the social world, as did the trainers who have been socialised and who have lived in a capitalist world. Whilst there are overt differences in situations, such as poverty and lack of freedom of speech in Ukraine, and relative wealth and democracy in the UK, there are also less tangible forces at work. Participants and trainers alike had been influenced by the negative stereotyping created and reinforced by both Soviet and Western governments during the Cold War, and both had different views about the nature of equality and anti-oppressive practice, and the relationship between the individual and society.

It is these differences that allow us an important insight into the cross-cultural consultancy process. Social action is a method of working that claims to place the power of content in the hands of participants. It is based on principles that recognise their experience and expertise and which gives them the tools to create change within their lives and communities.

Participants enjoyed the social action process and valued it so much that they took many activities and exercises into their own workplace. Trainers were selected because of their commitment to social action as a way of working. However, even with this acceptance and commitment, where two groups of people from two very different cultures experience it together, there will be issues and difficulties that arise as a direct result of such opposing world views.

This next section will compare both sets of data in the light of the table below, and will examine how the many different factors on each side of the table ensure that a common experience can be perceived and understood very differently.

Figure 6 - Knowledge and Experience Bases of British Trainers and Ukrainian Participants

UK Trainers Understanding of the World	Ukrainian Participant Understanding of the Word
<p>Capitalism</p> <p>Democracy</p> <p>Consumerism</p> <p>Civil Society</p> <p>Freedom of Speech</p> <p>Individualistic</p> <p>Freedom to travel</p> <p>High Standards of living – including health care, housing and availability of goods</p>	<p>Communism</p> <p>Totalitarian</p> <p>Shared goods and shortages</p> <p>Limited Civil Society</p> <p>Lack of Freedom with severe penalties</p> <p>Collective</p> <p>Isolated – World influences banned or limited – international travel a privilege</p> <p>Poverty</p>
<p>Social Work</p> <p>Statutory and voluntary sectors developed over a period of a century</p> <p>Community based fostering and adoption services with small children's homes based on the idea that a family is the best environment for the child</p>	<p>Social Work</p> <p>Very limited social services – benefits and other elements of welfare related to the work place</p> <p>Collectivist child welfare policies based on communist ideology that disparage the family/parental input</p>
<p>Cultural Issues</p> <p>Clashes of culture in terms of child care practices based on different professional values – leading to personal values emerging</p> <p>Anti-discriminatory practice – difficulties of challenging oppression both when trainers were subjected to discrimination and when they observed in the training room</p>	<p>Social Interaction</p> <p>Participants wanted to engage more with trainers to learn about Western practices and culture</p> <p>Wanted to have shared accommodation and more time to socialise</p>
<p>Language and Interpretation</p> <p>Interpreter as Individual – personal qualities important: confidence, and ability to convey meaning</p> <p>Interpretation as a process: importance of exact interpretation and not a summation – quality of English</p>	<p>Language and Interpretation</p> <p>Process of interpretation slowed the courses down – in a positive sense they felt that it gave them time to think about what they wanted to say</p> <p>Difficulties translating certain social</p>

UK Trainers Understanding of the World	Ukrainian Participant Understanding of the Word
<p>language skills vital to convey full meanings</p>	<p>work terms</p> <p>Not concerned with personal qualities of the interpreter but language skill important</p>
<p>Change</p> <p>Social action as an aid to self-belief</p> <p>Methods used successfully by Ukrainians in their work place – with both staff and children</p> <p>Trainers impressed with speed of change</p> <p>Worries concerning sustainability and the experimental nature of the pilot programmes</p>	<p>Time Scales</p> <p>Concern about rushing changes through</p> <p>Pressures from Western organisations causing resentment and concern for the children</p> <p>Change</p> <p><u>Fostering and Adoption</u></p> <p>Limited knowledge initially about concept of fostering – media campaign has increased awareness</p> <p>Legislation an obstacle but successfully changed</p> <p>Changes in public opinion</p> <p>Recognition that sustained change occurs over and long period of time.</p> <p><u>Residential Care</u></p> <p>Change harder to achieve due to ingrained systems</p> <p>Reluctance towards change due to commitment to children and not wanting to damage them further</p> <p>Making unfavourable comparisons with British children's' homes</p> <p>Physical changes – building repairs and changes to make the homes less institutionalised</p> <p>Attitudinal Change – child friendly approaches and listening to the views of children</p> <p>Organisational change – new staff, and organisational culture</p>

Expectation and Preparation

The British trainers had certain ideas about what working in a post-communist country would be like. Stereotypes of the Soviet Union were prevalent in the West throughout the Cold War and British trainers based their expectations on these. In the same way Ukrainian participants viewed Western influences with suspicion, often having had these suspicions reinforced since the end of communism through the deluge of negative Western exports such as drugs, sexualised films and consumerism.

Obviously the trainers had more to say about preparation, they were being paid to facilitate the courses and the onus was upon them to decide upon the activities that they felt would help participants create the change they wanted. Many of the trainers were keen to arrive in Ukraine with a clean slate, and to learn about Ukrainian culture from the participants themselves. However, the participants felt that as trainers, they had a responsibility to learn something about their culture and their economic and social situation. This seemed to be based on an understanding that Eastern and Western norms and culture were so different and that to be able to work effectively, trainers needed to know something about the wider context of Ukraine. It may also have been based in a resentment that they needed assistance anyway: loss of international status and anger at the rate of change and increased levels of poverty could very well have impacted on the frustration that participants felt with the trainers and their lack of knowledge. Ukrainians understand that standards of living are much higher in Western countries and there was an underlying feeling that trainers would conduct sessions from a Western perspective that denied the experiences of participants, expecting change to occur at the speed and level that it would in the West.

Social Action

The British trainers spoke far more of the social action process than did their Ukrainian colleagues. This comes as no surprise as the trainers were interested to see how the process would work within a cross cultural context. When British trainers spoke of social action as process and a method of working with people, they were able to bring to the data a whole range of views and experiences that they had developed through using social

action in the United Kingdom. They could present examples of their social action work in England and could talk knowledgeably about the principles that under pin it. They could also compare it to other methods. Alternatively the Ukrainian participants had no knowledge of social action, they were used to didactic methods of training and teaching, and so did not have any expectations of the courses as such and did not have alternative training experiences to be able to compare it. Trainers spoke of the philosophies of social action and the principles of working with people. Participants spoke of their enjoyment of the courses, the activities within them and the outcomes. They were able to describe the process and the fact that they the trainers had directed their ideas and their thinking, and they also spoke of using social action methods and training tools with both colleagues and young people. However, they did not have to compare social action to apart from the didactic methods that they had experienced all of their lives both at school and in the work place. Trainers also discussed transferability and imposition far more than did participants. For most of their lives, Ukrainians have had many things imposed upon them in every area of their lives. Political ideology was imposed, as were systems of working and behaving. To view social action as an imposition or to examine the extent to which it was imposed, would probably not have occurred to participants as they viewed it as part of their working lives, within which they had been taught not to question or challenge.

Social Interaction

Many of the issues raised during the interviews and within field notes were similar. Whilst Ukrainian and British parties may have held entirely different views, they all spoke about the training, language and interpretation, and changes. However within the data there were issues raised by Ukrainians that were not raised by trainers and vice versa and social interaction fell into this category.

Participants were disappointed that they were not able to socialise more with British trainers. Whilst there were always celebrations organised for the final day of the training, participants would have liked far more time socialising with the trainers. As can be seen in the first table. Ukrainians had been cut off from the world for a long period and as such they were

curious to discover about Western lifestyles. Trainers did not want to discuss Western culture with participants, feeling that if they did so they would be boasting or being seen to compare unfavourably. However, as people who had always have freedom to travel or simply to read about different places and cultures, the trainers did not understand this thirst for information.

Cultural Issues

This was another set of issues that was only raised by British trainers. Having lived and worked within Western social work settings, their view of the world is shaped by theories of anti-discriminatory theory that have been developed over decades and which incorporate the civil rights, feminist and disability movements: all of these philosophies and histories have influenced the development of social action, and as such are an integral part of the way in which social action trainers work.

Trainers had difficulty when they experienced language and behaviour that within their experience was oppressive. They understood that they were working within a different culture and that the people with whom they worked would view the world very differently. However, their values and beliefs were so ingrained they found it exceptionally difficult to ignore actions or comments that they perceived to be discriminatory and on occasions they were unable to control this frustration. The first table above examines the differences between the experiences of the trainers and the Ukrainian participants. Ukrainians lived in a society where there was limited social work practice, because their very existence would mean that all was not well within a society deemed by its hierarchy to be the perfect. Anti-oppressive practice is built upon the recognition that certain groups are discriminated against because they are seen to differ from the 'norm'. There would have been no recognition of this kind within the Soviet society because communism was the ideal, and any social difficulties would have been seen to be an acknowledgement that communism was far from the ideal it was hailed as. This issue will be examined in more depth within the discussion section.

Language and Interpretation

Both Ukrainian participants and British trainers relied upon interpreters and obviously, both parties commented upon the quality of interpretation important. Trainers were more focused upon the personal qualities of the individual interpreter, who they argued, needed to be confident enough to be able to get the attention of the group, to explain instructions thoroughly and also to be able to convey meaning through tone of voice, almost mimicking the trainer.

Ukrainians were more focused upon the quality of the interpretation itself and the impact that it had upon their learning. Some participants felt that interpretation slowed the training down, hindering heated argument or debate whilst others felt that it enabled them to think more clearly about what they wanted to feed back to the group, pauses whilst the interpreter was translating back allowing them to better construct their argument or opinion. Often social work terms that are commonly used in English have no Ukrainian equivalent and initially there was some time spent in the training deciding on the Russian phrase that would best describe the English term. After the first few sessions, British trainers began briefing interpreters about words and terms that might surface during the session and a translation was agreed on by both parties.

Time Scales

This was another issue that was important for participants and only raised by the trainers once, in the sense that the rate of change had been so fast. Obviously Ukrainians were more emotionally involved with the situation. They had met and built relationships with the children in the homes and had been disturbed by some of the distressing experiences that they had. It was these experiences that had made them troubled about the time scales and the extent to which the children might be further damaged if changes occurred too quickly. This was particularly true of participants on the fostering and adoption courses, who were keen that potential foster parents were trained and prepared very carefully. Some of the participants became angry with the partner organisations at their stringent adherence to deadlines with seemingly little understanding of the enormity of the situation and the potential to damage very vulnerable children.

Change

British trainers were unable to see the real impact of the training. They did not have access to the children's homes to examine the extent to which they had become less institutionalise, neither were they able to speak to prospective foster parents about their experiences with the Ukrainian social workers who had trained them. Their knowledge about the changes that had occurred came from the participants themselves and the publications that were written by the researchers from the UISR. There was also tangible evidence that the programmes had been successful: legislation changed in order that children and foster parents were protected and legislative procedures were adjusted so that parents and children were adequately and fairly represented in court.

Participants were able to see for themselves the levels of change that occurred on a very human level. They had access to the children's homes and trained, supported and managed the first foster carers. They also understood that creating a system of fostering would always be easier than creating change within large residential establishments that had operated in the same way for years. Small changes were noted and these were welcomed with enthusiasm. These included changes to the buildings to ensure a more attractive environment, encouraging staff to listen to the views of the children and changes in organisational culture that made the children feel more secure and less likely to run away, as is so often the case.

Conclusion

Personal experience has and individual views of the world impacted upon the information given during the data collection process, and as such have make it difficult to make comparisons, purely because these experiences are so different. Situations that were highly significant to British trainers were not mentioned by participants and vice versa. Power dynamics, perceptions of each other, personal beliefs and histories and political and social frames of reference were all so diverse that the differences in responses were no surprise. The discussion will use the literature to examine the impact of these differences and the extent to which they impacted upon the process of knowledge generation.

Chapter 9 - Discussion

The first chapters of this thesis presented a review of the literature relating to aspects of development, child care in central and eastern Europe, the concept of consultancy to the region, social action and finally power. The previous chapter analysed the empirical data, exploring the process of knowledge transfer and how it was used cross-culturally. There is much in the literature that is echoed in the empirical research undertaken and this chapter will revisit the literature, using the same headings, and will examine the data in the light of previous research and theory.

Development

The literature examined within this chapter contains many issues around superiority and imposition. Under-development would appear to apply to a country if it is not fully industrialized, technologically advanced with refined economic systems. Countries are judged by Western standards, if they are not able to engage with the capitalist system they are deemed to need aid. The first missionaries were governed by their own norms, and were so intrinsically convinced that they were advanced, they refused to see that the countries they visited and colonized had complex systems of their own. Ukraine, as a post-communist country, also has bureaucratic systems which stem from its history as part of the Former Soviet Union, and from the literature it would appear that the 20th century “missionaries” have as little understanding about the indigenous culture. Furthermore, the arrogance of which Hall (1992) speaks would also seem to be present in post-communist development consultancy. Hall (1992:314) argues that after enlightenment, the West was able to name itself as the summit of human history and that the ‘developing’ world was,

"The dark side, - forgotten, repressed, and denied; the reverse of enlightenment and modernity."

The data would suggest that there are still overtones of this in present day development initiatives in central and eastern Europe. Communism was seen for a long time by Western governments as a threat and as inherently evil. The stereotypes described in the data analysis demonstrate the extent

to which people in the West were manipulated into believing that this was the case. With the end of communism, the capitalist West had proved a point. Communism did not work for it created poverty, stifled individualism and subsidised industry so much that its infrastructure and economy were in tatters. Western capitalist countries are measuring central and eastern Europe based upon their own standards, and this manifested itself within the training rooms, where trainers were, at times, visibly shocked at some of the ideas of the participants around child care practices. The professional values of the British trainers were so ingrained that when they were faced with very different models of child care practice, they could not hide their disapproval and were sometimes overtly judgmental.

On an organizational level it was also apparent. For a lengthy period of time, UNICEF was the organisation that was in control of financial matters relating to the courses. Their processes and procedures were entrenched within capitalist ways of working, where every spend has to be accounted for and backed up with receipts. Participants were unused to this way of working and as such, were confused, angry and felt mistrusted by UNICEF. They were given no training to help them to understand the system, they simply seem to have been expected to obey UNICEF's financial rules. The data analysis argued that this anger and confusion, could have been caused by a reversal of roles, but it could have also been concerned with different ways of working and a new system to be followed that was very different to the old.

Cockroft (1972: 302) further highlights the extent to which development specialists are often unaware of the specific context in which they are working. He argues that development theory is formulated in industrialized countries and as such can not be effective when used in the countries at which they are aimed. The method of social action that was used in the training had been predominantly developed upon work in the UK, and from the data it would appear that the British trainers who delivered the training did not have any information about the cultural context in which they would be working. Also, Ukrainian participants voiced the view that social action trainers should have known far more about the social and economic climate of Ukraine. As Cockroft (1972) has argued, development studies is

essentially a Western academic discipline, and whilst academics and practitioners in the field may create what they perceive to be effective development models, if they are not grounded within a cultural understanding, their effects may be hampered.

Hettne (1995) uses the term academic imperialism to describe the role of many consultants and academics. He argues that researchers from the West conduct studies in the developing world and publish the findings to further their own academic credibility. As an agency, the CSA has benefited from its work in Ukraine and researchers have enhanced their own academic credibility, however, the work undertaken has been in partnership with the UISR and full recognition has been given to Ukrainian researchers for their work on the initial research.

In terms of evaluation, the CSA has attempted to learn from the work that they have undertaken in Ukraine to improve their practice in the region. Subsequent applications for work have taken into account lessons learned from this research. Unlike some of the evaluations mentioned by Tiongsen-Brouers (1990) where consultants are flown in for a series of weeks, this evaluation has taken place over a period of six years and the researcher has spent a considerable amount of time in-country. Indeed, reflection is an important aspect of the social action process. Trainers met after sessions with participants and debriefed the day, often using these discussions as a building block for the next day's session. However, from the data it would seem that whilst trainers reflected upon their work practices, they did not reflect on events outside of the training rooms and the consequences of this have been discussed at length within the data analysis. The social action process used with the participants could also have been used creatively with the trainers themselves as a tool for reflection and evaluation not simply about the training sessions but about the wider situation within which they were working. Social action trainers seem to want to engage others in the method and appear to perceive it as being 'for others' and as a process that facilitates 'other' groups and individuals. Had they taken themselves through the same process, not simply as trainers, but as individuals working within a different cultural context, their depth of understanding of the situation and their individual place within it would have added considerable

strength to the process, and may have avoided the misunderstandings that emerged during periods spent in Ukraine.

Paulo Freire encapsulates how, ideally, development work should be undertaken:

"It is not our role to speak to the people about our view of the world, nor to attempt to impose that view on them, but rather to dialogue with the people about their view and ours." (Freire 1972:77)

One could build on this quote and go on to argue, that the dialogue that takes place with other people needs to contain a percentage of dialogue with oneself. Critical self-reflection is as important as that which is undertaken with others. Social action should] not be perceived as only a tool to use with others, but as a means to understand the world as an individual. In its purest sense, the social action of which Freire speaks should be a way of living and a philosophy for engaging with other people. He concludes:

"The oppressor is solidary with the oppressed only when he stops regarding the oppressed as an abstract category, and when he stops making pious, sentimental and individualistic gestures and risks an act of love." (Freire 1970:32)

The 'act of love' of which Freire speaks could be interpreted as the leap from oppressor on the outside looking at the 'other', to the inside where there are no 'others' simply groups of individuals trying to understand the world and attempting, through dialogue to change it together.

This would certainly be the ideal, and it is idealistic for as the data analysis reveals, when people are involved in any process, they can not but impose their world view on others. Social action workers have experience of child care in the UK and as such are guided by legislation and policy that have been developed over a period of many years, sometimes grounded in lessons learned and often as a result of scandals in children's homes and in personal social services. If social workers act incorrectly, the consequences can be serious for both client and professional. Working within this environment impacts on the individual practitioner and based on their experiences they found it difficult to allow participants on courses to find their own way, particularly on matters of child protection, which now forms a large element of social work practice.

The data reveals that social action workers tried to allow the content of the courses to be governed by participants, they entered into dialogue and enabled the groups to discover for themselves the action plans that would form the blue prints for change. However, they were and are human, and just as the Ukrainian participants showed characteristics of the Russian mind (Hingley 1972), so the British participants exhibited features of the Western social worker.

Consultants and the Development Process

Chapter 4 highlighted numerous critiques of the ways in which Western experts enter a post-communist situation, many of these critiques are echoed within the data analysis but there are also some anomalies which will be discussed further on.

In the literature many issues have been highlighted that cause eastern Europeans to feel resentment towards Western consultants: lack of commitment and willingness to learn the language, very high rates of remuneration for short term projects in countries where the majority of people are suffering financial hardship, patronising attitudes and limited knowledge of the local culture are particularly emphasised as being the main factors causing ill-feeling.

Certainly the data analysis shows some resentment, particularly in terms of consultants not knowing about the social and cultural context within which they have come to work. When being critical of Western assistance in general, the Ukrainians interviewed spoke of being patronised but of being reluctant to turn down help in case it might cease altogether. The resentment seems not to be directed at social action trainers, rather it is rooted within the loss of global power, and having to work to the different rules that Western organisations demand. The UISR became involved with Western agencies, so giving themselves access to hard currency and approval from their employers. However, once the Western organisations began making demands, resentment began to materialize. It would appear that whilst working on an equal footing, the UISR enjoyed working in partnership with the CSA. However, when the CSA became the financial managers of the programmes, the situation became very different and the

relationship soured. With such elevated status within the old regime, the Director of the UISR perceived his status to be reduced. Before the changes in financial control of the projects, the Director spoke of working with an organisation with the same aims, sharing knowledge with equal status, this attitude quickly changed to feeling patronised and insulted. UNICEF was initially responsible for the financial aspects of the programme, and whilst there were complaints about having to account for every penny, there was little in the way of resentment. When the CSA took over the financial responsibility for the programmes, the Director of the UISR perceived this in some way as a betrayal. After having worked amicably on an equal footing for so long, the CSA became the employer and the UISR the employee, the Director's power was threatened because the money was passing between the hands of the Western organisations - which may have made him feel that he was not to be trusted and was simply another chip away at his status.

In terms of the actual training courses, participants were extremely positive about social action. There was a certain amount of resentment at the beginning of the training, where trainers started by simply exploring the groups experiences and understandings of childhood. Participants initially felt patronised, but when they saw the fact that trainers were simply encouraging them to empathise with the children they were working with, they understood the importance of empathy and why trainers had begun with exercises that encouraged this.

The literature criticised ways of working in the region, with business consultants being particularly guilty of imposing Western systems of working, and being judgmental of their eastern colleagues' business practices. In terms of social development consultancy, there are far fewer examples of this, possibly because social workers and those in related professions are committed to working with people in an anti-oppressive way. Participants were very positive about both the individual training style of the trainers and the methods that were used:

"We have gained new knowledge without feeling as though we have been forced to study. It seems that we got to where we are by ourselves, but in fact we were led by the trainers."

"The role plays and activities were very effective, we use them here with the children now. I used to work in a different way with children – it's made me think a lot."

The introduction of new ways of working was useful to the participants, although, like groups mentioned in the literature review, they found it unusual at first because their experience had been so different:

"Some trainers will just give you lectures - you couldn't call them workshops. They give you information, figures and examples from their own situation. People here are used to having such workshops, they're used to having lectures just as they did at school or university."

As a result of the social action training courses, people began to use different methods with the children and young people in their care and also with their staff. The findings suggest that one of the directors of the children's homes asked his staff simply to have a more child-centred approach. The culture of the home changed and fewer children ran away. As Illich (1993) points out, people respond well to non-didactic approaches and that,

"Most adults learn not from instruction, but from unhampered participation in a situation which is meaningful for them." (Illich 1993 quoted in Rachman 1994:12).

The CSA used predominantly a consultancy model for the programmes in Ukraine, however, there were exchange elements that were carefully planned. The CSA wanted to offer participants the chance to visit England to see models of good child care practice, but they did not want this to occur at the beginning of the programmes. Rather they wanted Ukrainians to begin to introduce new ways of working, based upon their own action plans and rooted within the cultural and social context. The visits to England only occurred when they had undertaken a considerable amount of work in-country, and the focus of them was to provide examples of alternative ways of working with children and young people.

Consultancy and the process of knowledge transfer is about offering people alternatives. As has been discussed earlier, using the social action process with people who have been used to didactic education, may seem like imposition, however, the researcher would argue that any training would be

meaningless if the aim was to work with people in ways that are familiar to them, not allowing them to move on for fear of imposing. Learning occurs when norms are questioned and people are supported to learn through their experiences. Within the training itself there are examples of instances when values and beliefs were imposed, but the social action process allowed people to own the content and to create for themselves the means through which they would create change and this will be examined in more depth in the section that discusses social action

The History of Family and Child Welfare Policy in the Former Soviet Union

Chapter 3 painted a picture of a system of state child care that is deeply ingrained within the culture of communist history. Stemming from way before the communist revolution in 1917, institutions were the only alternative for children finding themselves without the care of a family. Going back as far as the time of Peter the Great in the 17th century, abandoned and orphaned children were cared for in monasteries, and the 19th century saw tens of thousands in children's homes across Russia.

When the October Revolution occurred, collectivist welfare policies reinforced the notion that children should be cared for in institutions, indeed parents were largely perceived as being less able to rear children and that state guardianship was a better alternative. The tradition of children's homes in Russia and across central and eastern Europe has been ingrained for centuries, and is very much a part of the social policy landscape. This was reflected in the responses of participants on the courses that dealt with the de-institutionalisation of the homes. People in this group consisted of directors of homes and senior practitioners, most of whom had been working in child care for upwards of 15 years. One of them discussed the difficulties of change for this particular group:

"It is extremely difficult to tell them that some things need to change. I was confused that the trainers started the process very slowly, step by step, but later on I realised that this was the only method appropriate for residential staff, so that they do not reject new ideas straight away but giving them a chance to get into it slowly and safely."

The above quote reflects the literature on two distinct levels. Firstly in an ideological sense, the notion of communal care for children was perceived to be an entirely acceptable way of rearing children and early communist governments believed that under true socialism, the family would disintegrate. Participants on the residential course had worked in the same way for years, the ideology of the children's home was unquestioned and alternatives had never been considered. It is little wonder that change for them was so intimidating. Secondly, and as a result of this fear, the group had to be worked with very carefully, with new ideas introduced slowly and in a way that did not alienate them. There is a general feeling amongst care staff in children's homes that de-institutionalising children's homes and introducing systems of fostering and adoption, will eventually make them unemployed, a frightening prospect within a country where there are so few social safety nets.

The data reveals that participants on this course were well aware of the fact that their ways of working had been ingrained for many years. They also spoke of the fact that the people in the fostering and adoption group had an easier task; they were introducing a new concept and not trying to change people who had been used to working in the same way for many years. One of the participants gave an example of how she had tried to change her practice. She said that once the children were admitted to the home they did not see their parents. On the course, parental contact was discussed with the facilitators but she had found it too difficult to introduce this in her home:

"I have thought about it, but have decided not to let the children see their parents. I tried to allow it but the child suffered so much."

This concern was for the children and the participant was an extremely committed Director, however the quote also reveals a fear of change. After having been told for so long that contact with parents was unacceptable, rethinking this way of working was obviously difficult.

The literature concerning child care in the transitional period, is critical of the nature of the initial humanitarian aid that has been provided to children's homes in the region. In the first instance the aid that was given provided immediate relief to many institutions that were poverty stricken and lacking the most basic of supplies. However the assistance kept coming and as such

local administrations saw the homes receiving help from Western charities, and so re-adjusted their budgets, making children's homes dependant on aid (Aubrey 2000). The British trainers reflect this critique within the data.

"What is the alternative (to social action)? Take people presents and teddy bears, patronise them through the roof and tell them exactly what the answers are, bearing in mind we can't even catch a bus in here!?"

Another trainer further reinforces this argument and criticises the charities that are still providing lorry loads of material goods:

"They are setting up institutions and trying to strengthen them by sending out convoys of Western food and Western clothes . I think it's the very worst sort of dependency-creation."

The history of child care in the region is reflected within the data, resistance and fear of change, based on the fact that child care policies have existed for a long time and have rooted within an ideology that was not allowed to be challenged.

Social Action

Social action is essentially an approach to working with people and the data has revealed that the process appears to work, for it has created change for many children in residential care in Ukraine. Participants spoke positively of the training and the activities used to guide them towards their action plans. Their enjoyment of the training is unquestionable. Trainers spoke of their commitment to social action and the fact that they felt that it was culturally transferable and preferable to imposing a system of working. However, when one looks at the data in depth, there emerge difficulties: resentment, anger, frustration and powerlessness are all feelings that were expressed by both Ukrainian participants and British trainers in interviews and during field observations. These underlying tensions do not necessarily undermine the outcomes, however the question remains that if social action is perceived to be such a successful way of working with people, why have so many negative feelings been revealed within the data? This section will attempt to explore this question through an analysis of the six principles of social action and will examine the philosophies that underpin it, for it

appears that it is within the very principles of social action that the difficulties are rooted.

Principle 1

Social Action workers are committed to social justice. We strive to challenge inequality and oppression in relation to race, gender, sexuality, age, religion, class, culture, disability or any other form of social differentiation.

There is no question that the British trainers were committed to this principle. They all come from a background of social work, social action or community development and as such are committed to working with people and addressing inequality. However, working within a cross-cultural context there are issues that have been raised within the data analysis that make the act of challenging discrimination problematic and these seem to stem from a lack of cultural understanding and sensitivity. Also, when people are exposed to views that may clash violently with their own, it is extremely difficult to act in a way that does not allow personal views to be expressed, potentially alienating people with whom one is working. There were several examples within the data of when this occurred, with the facilitator imposing his or her own values upon the group or the individual. The difficulty arises when people say things that go against something that is so strongly felt, and the temptation is to change peoples' thinking to reassure ourselves that we have challenged and been true to our beliefs. Freire goes on to argue that there is an impulse amongst people from the 'developed' world to 'save' or change Third world or developing countries:

"Educating and correcting its thinking according to the director societies own criteria." (Freire 1974: 39)

It would appear that the British trainers did not have sufficient tools to be able to deal with what were, from Western perspectives, oppressive language or behaviour, and it would seem from the literature, that Freire does not offer many answers. His basic concepts understand the world to be an oppressive place although he does not discuss the extent to which the oppressed can be oppressors in certain situations and vice versa. His philosophies also seem to be global and whilst he discusses an empowering process and the development of a critical consciousness, he does not offer

guidance on how this is to be achieved at an individual level, and the extent to which peoples' individual life experiences and values will impact upon that process. Critics of Freire accuse him of not recognizing indigenous or traditional forms of power that are apparent within every day life and which are different from culture to culture. The data analysis presented a situation where during group work sessions, a man would always give feedback to the main group. Even when the group only contained one man — it was always he who would stand. Wuyts (1992) et al maintain that the situation of women is not mentioned in Friere's work, and that within an indigenous culture women may be excluded, from the process, based upon traditional notions about gender roles.

Freire begins with the oppressive situation, the culture of silence, and ends with liberation. The process jumps from the formation of the group to their awakened critical consciousness, without too much information about the middle section of the process where all of the difficulties occur due to the personal baggage that people bring with them. The research has found that challenge within a different culture is problematic. There is much international legislation governing equality and human rights and these include admirable ideals around protecting peoples' civil rights, but there is little information to guide how people work with others. Just as Freire's work presents an oppressive situation and an ideal situation, so the literature around anti-oppressive practice concentrates upon over-arching theories and models of oppression, but do not consider the process by which people might overcome discrimination as individuals within their lives and work places.

Thompson (1993) argues that there can be no middle road and that social workers should either attempt to undermine and challenge discrimination or condone it and reinforce it. He does not consider the extent to which people should challenge the oppressive attitudes of others, and how they should attempt this within their own culture, let alone one that has different understandings of oppression.

The difficulties experienced by the British trainers were based very much at the individual level. The first social action principle reflects the commitment of the CSA to anti-oppressive practice but this commitment is

based upon British perceptions of inequality, and as the literature and the data have shown, people in Ukraine view the world very differently and the principle loses its impact within another cultural context. The British trainers seem confused by their own powerful reactions to the oppressive language and behaviour on the training courses and whilst they would have been confident about being guided by this principle in the cultural context within which it was written, they understood the fact that they were in a different culture and seemed to feel that they could not use the principle in the same way as they would use it in a British context. This led to confusion, frustration and occasionally, and not surprisingly, feelings were vented on groups or individuals.

Whilst mainstream literature is concerned with the overarching theories of what oppression is and how it operates, there is specific social action literature that is explicit in terms of how to challenge oppression and discrimination. Mullender and Ward (1992) offer an example of how challenge can occur through the social action process, and the key to it is based upon asking the question 'why'. Trainers appeared to have been insufficiently equipped or prepared to use this principle, or had simply not thought through for themselves the most effective way of dealing with oppressive attitudes. As such, the social action training that they offered was in danger of simply being an educational process, not one which offers empowerment and liberation, enlightening participants and allowing them to move themselves and their practice forward into a way of working that is based on respect for others. This was a key dilemma that arose out of the data and it will be discussed in greater depth in the section that deals with principle 3.

Principle 2.

We believe all people have skills, experience and understanding that they can draw on to tackle the problems they face. Social action workers understand that people are experts in their own lives and we can use this as a starting point for our work.

This second principle is based upon a challenge to the notion that the professional always knows best. Social action was first used to work with groups of people who are oppressed in Western capitalist societies. It has

been used to work with groups of young people on deprived housing estates, with offenders and with those who most commonly come into contact with community or social workers. Within a development situation, principle 2 challenges the fact that Western practices are always perceived to be the most desirable. The literature has examined the notion of development and reveals that often, judgments are made about a particular situation and methods and solutions are imposed on people without any clarity of the social and cultural situation, and without any evidence that the programme will work. The second principle recognises that people are experts within their own lives and as such are best placed to make the decisions concerning their future.

In Ukraine, the British trainers were not working with a group that was directly oppressed, many of the participants held powerful positions at both the UISR and within the children's homes. However, as the literature has suggested, within a development context there are similar power structures at work based on notions of Western superiority and the power relations of the development process and as such the second principle was as important within this context as it is when working with oppressed groups in the United Kingdom.

From the data, it is clear that for the British trainers the second principle was one which they particularly adhered to. The Ukrainian data also provides plenty of evidence to suggest that participants felt that their input and understanding of their own situation was respected. There are several key quotes from participants within the data analysis that show the extent to which the second principle was an integral part of the work undertaken:

"We have gained knowledge without feeling as though we had been forced to study. It seems that we got to where we are by ourselves but in fact we were led there by the trainers,"

The exercises used on the courses were designed to do just this. Discussions and activities were simply a resource for finding out where people were, a desire to find out about the situation they were in and how they felt they could change it. At the end of the course people felt that they had achieved their goals themselves, and that their ideas had simply been

drawn out by facilitators: they had not been 'forced to study' a phrase which implies being told what to learn.

Participants were expecting 'banking' methods of learning, the contents of which Freire (1974:52) argues are,

"detached from reality, disconnected from the totality that engendered them and could give them their significance. Words, emptied of their concreteness become a hollow, alienating and alienated verbosity."

In his critique of Freire's method, Blackburn (2000) argues that some groups may lack the skills to be able to switch over to pedagogical methods of working. However, the data shows that whilst it was frustrating initially participants quickly engaged with the process and in some cases began using the various exercises with both staff and children in their care.

During the first few days of the training, people were confused with such a new way of working. They wanted quick solutions to their problems and were expecting to be told how to go about creating change. The next key quote from a Ukrainian participant indicates the extent to which people were clear that they had in deed found the answers for themselves;

"At first they felt frustrated, they did not understand what was going on, they came to the workshops to have their questions answered - and it was quite frustrating- no answers. They didn't understand that they were actually in the process of getting those answers and only at the end of the process do they realize that they developed those answers for themselves,"

The British trainers spoke of their commitment to the second social action principle. When asking the interview questions, the researcher was keen that rather than ask direct questions about the principles, through their very nature they would emerge from the data if a commitment to them was real. The data revealed that social action workers spoke of them as being an integral part of their work. Again there are several key quotes that reflect this:

"You actually allow people to utilize their skills and their knowledge, to reach a solution to a problem as defined by themselves."

"Our training out there is essentially process led, it's about asking questions but its about the people you're working with controlling the content."

The next quote reveals that British trainers recognised the frustration that participants felt when they realised that they were not going to give lectures that offered immediate solutions:

"By the second day it was like the light bulb came on and they realised that they didn't need their notebooks but that they had a lot more of themselves and that was very empowering."

Occasionally social action trainers imposed professional values and this will be discussed in greater depth in the section that deals with the role of the facilitator, but generally, the commitment to recognise peoples skills and experiences, and to draw out solutions based on these was apparent throughout the courses. Most importantly it is clear that the Ukrainian participants recognised and valued this to the extent that they felt confident to take the methods they learned into their own workplace.

Principle 3

People have rights including the right to be heard, the right to define the issues facing them and the right to take action on their own behalf. People also have the right to define themselves and not have negative labels imposed upon them.

Social action trainers were on the whole skilled at asking people to define the problems that existed for them. The first days of the training consisted of exercises and activities designed to map out the situation for children in care, and to decide upon situations where a child might be happiest. Culturally some of their answers were unusual from Western perspectives, but comments in the field notes suggest that the trainers recognised that there were differences and did not attempt to correct, judge or impose alternatives. The action plans were entirely drawn up by participants and if there were problems implementing them, the trainer would seek to define the problem with the group or individual, allowing them to reflect and facilitating the collective decision-making process.

Once again it is clear that this third principle, particularly the second half, was written with oppressed groups in mind and as an antidote to the way in

which welfare services and aid and development workers tend to make judgments about the people with whom they work, defining their client groups based upon the experience and beliefs of the professional and imposing solutions for them based upon a perspective that may be entirely alien to the individual or group. In the United Kingdom as argued by Ward and Boeck (1999:8) people are labelled as deviant and trapped inside a:

“Self-perpetuating narrowness of vision, introspection and ‘victim blaming’ induced through poverty, lack of opportunity and exclusion”

As has been argued above, the groups of participants in Ukraine were not oppressed in the same way that a welfare service-user in the UK would be oppressed, but from the data there are ways in which this particular principle has relevance to the work conducted in Ukraine.

This principle stems from the way in which social care professionals impose negative labels upon people. Oppressed groups are stereotyped and making assumptions are made about groups or individuals that are not based upon evidence but on dominant ideologies: Thompson (1993:27) continues:

“Dominance, inequality and injustice are maintained by reference to stereotypes for example of black people, of women, of old or disabled people. Stereotypes are therefore powerful tools of ideology and are this significant obstacles to the development of anti-discriminatory practice.”

Stereotypes are judged by what is the norm within society and Thomson (1993) goes on to argue that when a group or individual differs from the norm of the white majority, they are deemed inferior. Asian families are perceived as being stand-offish and prone to ‘look after their own’, African Caribbean women are too strong and committed to earning a wage, and men who are gay abuse children and attempt to ‘convert’ their heterosexual peers. Deviating from the white, able-bodied, heterosexual ‘norm’ can result in pathologising and affects the way in which the social worker perceives and works with the ‘deviant’ individual or family.

The data analysis has shown some of the stereotypes that British trainers had of Ukraine and the post-communist region, but these stereotypes were quickly overturned once the training teams had met and worked with the participants. The problems arose when the Ukrainians stereotyped other

people, the two most obvious cases being gender stereotyping and attitudes towards gypsies, and trainers were ill-equipped to deal with these situations. The imposition of values occurred when trainers' very personal and deep seated values and beliefs were challenged or when they felt that there was the potential for children to be harmed as a result of the decisions of the participants. For example, when the trainer put down the participant aggressively after she had made what he had felt was an inappropriate suggestion, he was thinking about how the child would be affected, felt that it would be negative and could not control his response. In the same way, when the trainers were criticised by participants for not touching children or showing them affection, all the child protection alarm bells were triggered and they responded judgmentally as British social workers and not social action facilitators.

Similar issues were raised in the discussion of principle 1, in that whilst social action workers are committed to the values in that principle, they seemed not to be able to put it into practice within a cross-cultural setting. An examination of the data reveals that trainers did not perceive the participants to be oppressed. Together it would appear that there are issues around perceptions of oppression as it exists globally, and a lack of training in the use of the social action tools to be able to address it appropriately. Negative labels were imposed upon participants when they made comments concerning touching children, they were also imposed when oppressive comments and behaviours were heard and observed around race and gender. Put together it would appear that the trainers were acting in a way that reinforced the notions that both Western values and work practices are superior.

The root of these difficulties would seem to lie in preparation. The Ukrainians made it clear that they expected British trainers to have information about their cultural context, and the social and political situation in which they lived and worked. The above discussions reveal how crucial this was. Information was needed in order that the trainers were able to understand the context within which they were working and, alongside that information, there should have been training around the skills that are

needed to address some of the dilemmas that might occur given the differences in work methods and values.

Principle 4

Injustice and oppression are complex issues rooted in social policy, the environment and the economy. Social action workers understand people experience problems as individuals but these difficulties can be translated into common concerns.

Principle 5.

We understand that people working collectively can be powerful. People who lack power and influence to challenge injustice as oppression as individuals, can gain it through working with people in a similar position.

These two principles are interconnected, firstly recognizing that issues of oppression are rooted in social policy, the environment and the economy and secondly that individual problems can be translated into common concerns. The fourth principle runs into the fifth, which acknowledges that through acting collectively, people can successfully challenge the discrimination and oppression they experience.

Oppression is rooted within social policy, environment and the economy. However different cultures perceive and experience oppressions differently. In the West, we are familiar with the groups that are oppressed in our own culture. The Western literature around anti-oppressive practice concentrates on issues around gender, race, ability, sexuality and age, with references to people living in deprived estates and experiencing the effects of social exclusion. However, in broader international terms, there are other forms of oppression which are directly related to global inequality and it is in this sense that participants of the courses could be said to be oppressed, based on their new status and the extent to which they are controlled by global capitalist economic systems and the ideologies that accompany them. Oppression for Ukrainians is concerned with the extent to which people have been expected to embrace capitalism and to recognise its superiority. Post-communist countries have been given no choices and the loans that they have received have only been given on the proviso that social spending is cut, subsidies removed and that economies are restructured in order that they are able to assimilate into the wider global economy. The data

revealed that many of the participants spoke of the pressure that they faced in terms of their personal lives. Due to the economic cuts and rapid inflation rates, peoples' salaries are able to buy much less than under the old system, they are struggling to survive. On top of this they were having to become used to new images, ideas and concepts that they had difficulty understanding. Being deluged by Western popular culture has been oppressive for people, but it is an oppression that is entirely new, both for participants and to the trainers who were working with them. It is oppression that is rooted in economy, social policy and environment that are in some ways familiar to Westerners, and in some ways entirely different. Currently in transition Ukraine is a country that is moving away from collectivist and work-based welfare, to the kind of social welfare that we are more familiar with in the West: a basic safety net for the poorest with many services privatised. Whilst Westerners have been used to this occurring over a period of years, Ukrainians and other citizens of the post-communist world will have seen enormous changes within their systems that have taken place over a decade. Previously Ukrainians were oppressed through overt ways with harsh consequences for all those who challenged the party or its ideology, latterly they have been attempting to come to terms with the different oppressions that occur within a capitalist system. The data analysis reveals that this has been difficult for them, for they have been used to tangible discrimination that they have learned to live with throughout their lives, through different means of communication and coping mechanisms (Hingley 1972). Oppression under a capitalist system is far less tangible and with less physically violent consequences. People used different tools to deal with soviet communism and have had no time to develop tools to be able to deal with oppression within a developing capitalist economy.

Principle 5 represents the key to the 'why' stage of the social action process. People are asked to formulate ideas to discover why they are in the situation they are in. The 'why' question, when used with oppressed groups in the United Kingdom, asks people to walk away from the emotions of guilt or self-pity that social welfare services have traditionally engendered and to examine their situation in the light of economics, ideology and the policies

that reinforce them. Social action trainers did not have any knowledge of the situation in Ukraine regarding past and current oppressive social policies and the extent to which people may have dealt or be dealing with them. Furthermore, participants were not service-users, and as such, it would seem that the British trainers had not thought through how they should address the 'why' question in the context of different forms of oppression to those of the Western context. In such circumstances, social action moves away from being a process for political enlightenment and critical consciousness, and becomes in practice a pragmatic process for working towards a particular aim with a group of people. The point of the training courses was to begin to transform the system of state child care in Ukraine, not to raise levels of awareness of an oppressed group. Harrison and Ward (1999) describe how the groups worked successfully in Ukraine. However, at no point do they consider how the principles work in the very specific context of training as opposed to working with groups of service-users.

What the training did do was to bring people together to work as a group with common concerns. All of the people in the groups were committed to creating change in the lives of the children they worked with and as such there was a terrific knowledge base within the group around child welfare in Ukraine, either as policy makers, practitioners or managers. The essence of the fifth principle is that people acting collectively can create change, and from the data there is no doubt that positive change occurred. It was important for people to come together in a group to discuss their concerns and to work together on action plans.

Social care professionals are isolated in Ukraine, they rarely have the opportunity to come together to share experiences and achievements, and this is more so with the emerging voluntary sector (UNICEF 1992). Harrison and Ward (1999:93) argue that:

"The experience of being with other people in the same position can engender strength and new hope where there was apathy before."

The groups also gave people a sense of personal support. One of the researchers who had to analyse the situation of children and young people in care, found herself talking to many children who had experienced traumatic situations in their own lives. Whilst she of course knew that institutions

existed, she had never come into contact with the children who lived there. The experience was stressful for her and this was something that she shared with the group who were able to empathize with her based upon their own more hands-on experiences as managers and practitioners.

Principle 5 is particularly action-oriented and less concerned with ideological and philosophical content. People working collectively can be powerful. The participants on the courses were from a variety of different backgrounds. Some represented children's homes, as managers or practitioners, others had taken children into their homes, some worked for voluntary organisations with a wide variety of young service-users, researchers from the UISR were involved, as were children's rights and family law specialists. Acting collectively they changed legislation, introduced systems of fostering and adoption and began to make children's homes more child-centred and family orientated. The action stage of the process and the principle which guides it leaves the trainer behind and concentrates on the task at hand.

As has been discussed above, the principles which are guided by philosophies and anti-oppressive working, particularly principle 1, are complex when placed within a cross-cultural context. When the time came for people to 'act' they did so: solid action plans allowed them to go back to work with a purpose, and based on those they created extraordinary changes in a relatively short space of time. What the participants received was a process that enabled them to move on and with activities that they could use with both colleagues and service-users. They recognised that the trainers did not impose work upon them, and ultimately saw the social action process as a useful tool.

Facilitators were far more concerned about being true to the principles of social action, and it would seem that this commitment created the difficulties. The principles of social action are deeply rooted in an understanding of oppression and a commitment to challenging it – values that are deep rooted in experience and personal beliefs about other people and the world. The final social action section concerning principle 6 will examine the nature of the social action facilitator and will look at the

complex challenges that British trainers faced when working within a cross-cultural context.

Principal 6.

Social action workers are not the leaders but the facilitators. Our job is to enable people to make decisions for themselves and take ownership of whatever outcome ensues. Everybody's contribution to the process is equally valid and it is vital that our job is not accorded privilege.

The role of the facilitator in the social action process is crucial. It is they who guide the group on a process, which begins with an examination of their reality and which ends with an action plan to create change. Throughout this process they must be aware of themselves and of their own input in the group, they must be aware of the group itself and the experiences within it, they must manage conflict within the group and inside themselves, they must not impose or judge but should be clear about what they are able to accept or not and they should have a commitment to liberating people through this process, never being tempted to take the 'driving seat' and always allowing the group to create content and control direction. In short the social action process demands much from its facilitators.

Freire (1970) speaks of the facilitator in idealistic terms, expecting them to be able to put aside their own values and beliefs and to be purely on the side of, or 'solidary' with, the oppressed, committed to their freedom:

"To be a good liberating educator, you need above all to have faith in human beings. You need to love, you must be convinced that the fundamental effort of education is to help with their liberation, never their domestication." (in Maclaren and Leonard 1995:25)

This begins, he argues, with some recognition about the experiences and realities of the group or people with whom one is working. In the case of the British trainers in Ukraine this understanding was fundamental, and yet one of the areas that caused the most complications. Freire (1970:76) continues:

"We must never merely provide programs which have little or nothing to do with the their own preoccupations, doubts, hopes and fears. Programs which at times in fact increase the fears of the oppressed consciousness."

The social action trainers were successful at doing this on one level. The content of the programmes was not imposed, rather the participants were asked to describe their situation, to formulate alternatives and to draw up action plans. However, from the data analysis there are instances where participants were vocal about wanting the trainers to have more knowledge concerning their culture, social and political situations, and their own personal realities. These opinions were not grounded in the training room in terms of the work that was being undertaken, rather they were rooted in a more personal context – wanting the trainer to be aware of the pressures placed on them, their confusion at the changes they were experiencing and their efforts to cope with the influx of new influences coming from the West. As one participant argues:

"They need to know about the social situation, politics, everything that effects the way people work in different situations. Our government has made it comfortable for Westerners who visit, but because of this they cannot get an accurate picture of the reality."

Freire goes on to argue that educational programmes cannot be administered in isolation of the experiences of the participants and that an understanding of their realities is crucial:

"One cannot expect positive results from a ...program which fails to respect the particular world view held by the people. Such a program constitutes cultural invasion, good intentions notwithstanding." (Freire 1970:76)

There were instances within the data analysis where trainers did not seem to take into account the world view held by the participants. However, it is the belief of the researcher that this was not as a result of disrespect, rather it was a result of their own view of the world and within that their intertwined professional and personal values that acted as a block to understanding the realities and mindset of the participants.

Within their own culture, British trainers will have an understanding of the political and ideological structures that result in people being oppressed or socially excluded. Whilst they may not all know personally what it is like to live on a deprived housing estate, or as a black or disabled person, they will be very familiar with the structures that reinforce the discrimination that these groups face in the United Kingdom. In Ukraine the political culture is

one which is attempting to break out of a collectivist mentality. Socially and culturally, it is trying to reclaim its national heritage and language. The trainers were given no preparation around the effects of almost a century of communism, about the historical and political context of state child care, or about the different oppressions inherent in different cultures and experienced by different groups. It was no surprise that when comments were made that were perceived as being oppressive, the trainers became emotional and frustrated, and allowed their own views of the world to come into the training room.

One of the trainers recognized his own frustration and admitted that he had allowed his own personal views to come to the surface. Hearing a derogatory comment about gypsies, he reacted angrily, and later regretted how he had dealt with the situation. This regret was rooted in the understanding of the difference in culture and the trainer understood that a more sensitive approach would have been more appropriate and as Freire suggests:

*"We must recognize that their view of the world, manifested variously in their actions, reflects their situation in the world."
(Freire 1970:77)*

There are some dilemmas here as Principle 1 asserts that social action workers are committed to challenging inequality and oppression in all its forms. Ward and Mullender (1991:142) argue that:

"It is essential to be honest with members about your bottom line, about what you can and can not accept."

In this case, the comment about the gypsies, would be unacceptable for a British social action worker, but in central and eastern Europe, gypsies are the target of considerable racist feeling. They are ghettoised, labelled and largely alienated from mainstream society and for the non-gypsy population of central Europe, this is a situation that they have been used to for many years, and is largely accepted and ingrained. During the 1994 football World Cup, after the Romanian team had beaten Argentina, a headline in a French newspaper proclaimed that one of the best teams in the world had been beaten by a 'crowd of gypsies'. The Romanian government were quick to voice their fury. The Romanian ambassador to France was

recalled, and the French government was forced to make an apology. As this situation shows, widespread hatred of gypsies is endemic in the region and it was difficult for social action trainers challenge such deep rooted feelings. However using the 'why' phase of the process would have been a useful tool for sensitively addressing the problem and unwrapping the feelings of people who feel such passionate dislike for another race. Yet, as has been argued above, the trainers were not sufficiently prepared to use the 'why' phase of the process within a different cultural context.

Blackburn (2000) argues that the facilitator will have their own understandings of power and oppression which may differ from that of the group, and as such he will have an agenda based upon this understanding. Principle 1 contains a conviction that is highly emotive and very much part of an individual's central beliefs about the world, and when it is triggered, unless trainers are strong enough to be able to handle the situation sensitively, imposition may occur. It is at this point that anti-oppressive practice may become oppressive based on the circumstances and the understandings of the people involved. Anti-discriminatory practice, as has been discussed in the literature review, has grown out of a backlash to the unequal nature of capitalism. People in Eastern Europe were isolated from the rest of the world for decades and as such segregated from debates around oppression and inequality. Principle 1 asks social action workers to challenge inequality in all its forms, but principle 6 and the philosophy of social action asks workers not to impose. Working within a cross-cultural context highlights this dilemma, and the data has shown that people are at times confused and frustrated in situations where the two philosophies clash.

The principles of social action offer important guidelines in terms of working with people, however they are guidelines that were created and developed in a Western British context. They were also designed to guide the process of social action when working with oppressed groups in the UK, normally young people and welfare service-users. In Ukraine, it was used as a problem solving exercise with groups of professionals and it is within this context that the principles were simply not sufficient to be able to guide the work effectively. To a certain extent one could see the principles in action: the content was controlled by the participants and the trainers

understood and valued the wealth of experience brought by participants. However, the problems seemed to occur when social action came second to peoples' personal values. Ukrainian participants became angry when their individual struggles were not acknowledged by trainers, and trainers became upset when they came up against values that they personally considered to be oppressive. Social action facilitators had power within the group, they were perceived to be the experts, and as visitors to another culture, it was essentially their responsibility to act in ways that would not upset or harm the participants, recognizing their world view and not judging but working together to create meaningful learning and change. Freire calls this cultural synthesis and argues that:

"Cultural synthesis does not deny the differences between the two views, indeed it is based on these differences. It does deny the invasion of one by the other, but affirms the undeniable support each gives to the other." (Freire 1970:162)

In this way Freire seeks to address the difficulties of bringing together people of different world views. He recognises the humanity of the oppressed but also fails to fully take account of the human nature of the revolutionary leader or facilitator. Neither does he mention that oppressors in one situation may also be oppressed in different circumstances and whilst he understands how the oppressed are trapped in naïve consciousness, he expects that the leader or the facilitator will be fully conscientised – without being clear as to how this occurs (Blackburn 2000). However, Freire does acknowledge the fact that the world view of the group cannot and should not remain static and that it should change, indeed his philosophy is geared towards monumental change. The objective of the facilitator is not to impose a view on people, it is to guide them through a process that will bring them to a heightened stage of consciousness where their view of the world will change and where they will understand the extent to which they and others are oppressed and will want to transform this reality. In this way Freire recognises that the facilitator should not be restricted to the world view of the participant or be ready to leave them there:

"Cultural synthesis does not mean that the objectives of the revolutionary action should be limited by the aspirations expressed in the world view of the people. If this were to happen (in the guise

of respect for that view), the revolutionary leaders would be passively bound by that vision." (Freire 1970:163)

It is how this occurs that is important, and should be through dialogue and a commitment to, and an understanding of, what it is to be oppressed. This is the essence of the role of the facilitator. Not to challenge people is to be limited by their aspirations, but at the same time recognising that their view of the world, and their oppression makes them think and act in ways that may be different from the facilitator. Freire talks about the notion of love and how it should guide the leader. He recognises that it is a sentimental term but argues eloquently that it is the key to his pedagogy and the role of the leader:

"No matter where the oppressed are found,, the act of love is a commitment to their cause – the cause of liberation, and this commitment because it is loving is dialogical. As an act of bravery, love cannot be sentimental; as an act of freedom, it must not serve as a pretext for manipulation. It must generate other acts of freedom otherwise it is not love." (Freire 1970 :71)

Love in this sense seems to mean an understanding of the world view of other people, a recognition of ones own values in comparison to theirs and why these will be different; a commitment to equality and liberating people from their own oppressive feelings, and a sensitivity which does not seek to impose but to enter into dialogue.

There are complexities within this argument. The participants on the courses are not oppressed in the way in which Western participants of social action are oppressed. However as a country that is perceived to be 'developing' they are experiencing oppression at a global level. The principles of social action are written with British perspectives of discrimination and oppression in mind and whilst Freire advocates an approach that does not impose views on people, he says at the same time that the facilitator should not be fearful of not remaining passive to the world view and aspirations of the oppressed – therefore he should challenge their views.

Social action works with people who are oppressed, and the facilitators perceive themselves as those who are working with the oppressed group to liberate them through a journey of exploration of their situation and actions

that will free them. They do not see themselves as being oppressed themselves and therefore find it easier to challenge the views of those whom they perceive to be trapped within a culture that holds oppressive views towards others. The key to unravel these complexities then, seems to lie within how trainers/facilitators perceive themselves. As has been argued above, people can be oppressed and oppressors at the same time. British society contains many examples of institutionalised racism and sexism, and having been exposed to this from a young age, the argument that all white people are rarely completely free of racist values, or men of sexist values appear to hold some weight. If then, social action facilitators recognized the oppressor in themselves they would be able to empathise more with those who are also oppressive. Using the very tools that they have used in the training room, they would be approaching discriminatory tendencies in others on a more equal basis. Cross-cultural challenge then, would be less problematic because in recognising their own oppressive behaviour and views, they would be stepping away from judgmentalism and towards love of which Freire speaks – which ultimately means solidarity.

The role of facilitator is a difficult one because it is oppressed and oppressor entering into dialogue with each other. Within a different cultural context the roles and the norms are different. Values and beliefs have been shaped by different forces, and to be oppressed and oppressive under communism is very different to being oppressed and oppressive within a capitalist society. The principles acted as a guide for the trainers but they did not use them effectively and, as such, were unable to deal with these complex differences.

There was no doubt that certain elements of the social action process worked well in Ukraine. People were given control of the content of the training programs and developed their own action plans to achieve the change that undoubtedly occurred. However, this is simply about a successful educational method or process, and social action asserts that it is about much more than simply a tool. The social action trainers applied the process successfully, but became impotent when they were confronted with prejudices that they did not understand. There existed a chasm that trainers simply could not cross that related to different understandings of oppression as they exist in eastern European and Western cultures. Ukrainians asked

that trainers have more of an understanding about their specific social and cultural context, however the above discussions would suggest that trainers needed to go beyond a simple grounding in post-communist and Ukrainian culture. What was in fact required, was a learning process that examined the nature of the different dimensions of anti-oppressive practice that exist within different ethnicities and cultures. Gender discrimination, homophobia, racism and attitudes towards disability are different globally and as such should be challenged in a way which understands the context from which they have arisen, and in a way that recognizes where an individual is at.

Aggressive challenge does not move people forward, it makes a prejudicial judgment and does not help the task of asking people to analyse the root of their oppressive beliefs and so to challenge themselves. If used effectively social action asks people to do this, not accepting the oppressive behaviour (principle 1), by asking the question 'why', discovering the source of the prejudice, engaging in a dialogue and achieving the cultural synthesis of which Freire speaks. Cultural synthesis recognises difference. Challenge which comes out of anger or a lack of understanding, denies the differences between cultures, for it is based on the personal world view of the challenger.

The educational process of social action works within a cross-cultural context, the chasm that blocks the liberatory nature of the process from emerging lies within a limited understanding of the principles and a lack of skills to be able to allow them to be visible in the work undertaken. It is when the facilitator has developed sufficient tools to be able to incorporate the principles into the process, that social action becomes an education for liberation, and does not simply remain a training method, however effective.

Power

Numerous different issues have been raised within the data analysis, and many of these seem to be connected to power and relationships of power. The literature has provided a picture of the ways in which power is central to debates on central and eastern Europe on an international level and the previous section suggests that power inequalities upon an international stage

are represented at both the organisational level, between the various agencies involved, and the individual level with trainer and participant.

The literature which deals specifically with consultancy in central and eastern Europe is descriptive, providing examples of processes and outcomes, it does not generally enter the realms of behavioural analysis and it does not examine the underlying issues of power and influence that govern the process.

This research has found that international development consultancy is complex on several different levels. In the first instance there are the issues that are specifically related to the post-communist context and the ways in which international powers (political, economic and cultural) have sought to influence and control the transition process. Also related to the international level are the ways in which people perceive each other based upon the propaganda fuelled by both Western and communist governments.

Coming down to an organisational level, power manifests itself through the ways in which the different agencies operate and how they are able to use their own specific 'power tools' to influence the process. Perceptions of the different agencies are again an important aspect in terms of how they operate together.

The final individual level reflects the former levels in that what takes place within the training situation and within the individual interviews conducted, is the extent to which individual power play is at work. Personal values and beliefs, shaped by culture and propaganda have impacted upon the work that has been undertaken, individual perceptions of communism and the West, are evident in the ways in which people relate to one another.

To begin to explore some of these issues of power, the researcher will first recap on the situation in central and eastern Europe placing it within its international, historical context.

The Soviet Union was once a global so-called super-power which competed during the cold war years predominantly with the United States of America but also with neighbouring democracies in Europe. A clash of ideologies gave rise to the arms race and both sides instilled into their peoples a sense of loathing and fear for the other. Both believed that they had 'right' on

their side and sought power through propaganda and media. This can be reflected quite clearly through some of the interviews conducted with both Ukrainian participants and British trainers.

The former were concerned about dubious imports from the West such as drugs, pornography and sexually explicit films. They had been told for a long time that Western imperialism was evil and that within a socialist society such things would not be tolerated: the influx of Western influence must have confirmed much of what they had been told through such propaganda.

Kideckel (1994) in Creed and Wedel (1997:255) states that,

"the chronic economic difficulties and shortages in the socialist states were regularly blamed on the machinations of imperialist powers, Wall Street bankers, and financial lackeys like the international monetary fund"

Creed and Wedel (1997) go on to argue that whilst this propaganda may not have been believed at the time, people are beginning to give it credibility. They argue that many people in the region feel humbled and let down by the West. Humbled because their position of power has been taken away from them. Where previously they were a dominant supplier of aid, they are now the supplicants and receivers, and let down because they believed that once communism had been vanquished, Western governments would provide them with all the aid that was needed. Creed and Wedel (1997:254) provide some of the rationale for these expectations:

"The embrace of east European defectors by Western countries, Western investment in propaganda tools such as Voice of America and Radio Free Europe, and the concern for the victims of communism, espoused by Western diplomats in international arenas, all convinced those behind the 'iron curtain' that the West was waiting to come to their aid."

On the international stage, Ukrainians feel humbled. Having once been perceived globally as part of the Soviet Union and therefore a superpower, they are now seen globally as being 'the second world' not as needy as the third world, but nevertheless much less than their status during the Cold War period. As well as not receiving what they thought they would receive in terms of Western aid, it would seem that what is actually coming over to

the region from the West are all kinds of other aspects and side effects of aid such as economics, culture and politics that have been unexpected. A considerable amount of the aid that has been given to post-communist countries has been based upon Western perceptions of need and assistance which also ensures that the region is subsumed as quickly as possible into the dominant global world order of capitalism and consumerism.

The literature review examined the concept of hegemony, and introduced the idea of dominant ideologies and cultures. Within the above context in central and eastern Europe, one is able to observe these dominant cultures and ideologies being imposed and in this way the process through which hegemony occurs and is reinforced.

To examine the roots of global capitalism and the way in which it has formed and reformed itself over the years would most certainly require another thesis. Foucault himself admitted, when responding to criticism of his works and beliefs, that to write and to understand about ideas was akin to becoming lost in a labyrinth. He argued that one could not write about complex issues and expect to arrive at simple answers. He continued, *"Leave it to our bureaucrats and our police to see that our papers are in order. At least spare us their morality when we write."* (1972:17).

However, examining global capitalism as it is now and the way in which it has asserted itself in the post-communist world allows us to gain an insight into global power structures. This thesis can not seek to explain and analyse global power structures, and to arrive at a simple conclusion. The evidence simply allows us to examine how a dominant global culture has sought and is seeking to transpose a local culture (communism) which was equally as dominant for its peoples.

The concept of hegemony begins with the notion of culture, defined by Clarke (1976:10) in Haralambos and Holborn (2000:97)

"The 'culture of a group or class is the distinctive 'way of life' of the group or class, the meanings, values and ideas embodied in institutions, in social relations, in systems of beliefs, in mores and customs, in the uses of objects and material life."

Clarke et al go on to argue that the cultures exist in hierarchical relationships and that one will always be more powerful than another. A

relevant example of this is Hall's (1992) 'West and Rest' discourse, where he argues that Western culture is globally dominant and that all other cultures are 'other'. Clarke however, does not believe that one culture can ever dominate all other cultures and that as Foucault maintains, where there is power there will always be resistance.

Within the literature review hegemony is defined as:

"A form of social and political control which combines physical force or coercion with intellectual, moral and cultural persuasion or consent." Ransome (1992:122).

Within the international or macro context in central and eastern Europe, one can find numerous examples of this. Political control has been exerted in terms of the will to introduce democratic systems of government and the transformation of old systems of administrative capacity and justice and home affairs. Intellectually one simply has to examine the roles of international Universities who have supplied consultants to the region, recreating international courses across the faculties but particularly in business and economics. Morally the end of communism has allowed the west to make the point that communism was corrupt. Glasnost began this process through exposing some of the crueller activities of Josef Stalin and subsequent Soviet leaders, but the West were quick to reinforce the negatives, offering capitalism as the only alternative and using the media to present evidence of the poverty, economic hardship and social deprivation of the post-communist countries. Culturally there are plenty of examples of the extent to which the West has attempted to impose its own cultural framework on the region. As already mentioned, Barber (1998:7) uses the term McWorld to illustrate the dominance of Western (particularly United States) popular culture and maintains that nations are being pressed into one homogeneous culture, *"tied together by communications, information, entertainment and commerce."*

Within the eastern European context, there are also signs of power in terms of both persuasion and consent. One example of this is the enthusiasm of central and eastern European countries to join the European Union. In order to be able to do this, the EU is able to place certain demands and conditions upon these countries in order that they conform to standardised methods and

processes of government. The candidate countries are willing to do this because to be accepted, means for them financial gain and access to structural funds. They are being 'persuaded' that conformity will bring them reward. Consensual control seems to be happening at a more subliminal level. As has been discussed above, the people of the region have been subjected to the concept of marketing. Consumer goods that were unavailable for so long have now flooded the region and with these goods comes the reinforcement of popular culture, through media and advertising. Nader et al (1997:18) maintain that this amounts to controlling images that convey "*what people should be, should think and should buy.*"

Within eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union, one can observe the process of hegemony. However, as Clarke maintains above, dominant ideology can always be opposed and total domination or hegemony is never complete. The process through which this occurs can be seen more on an organisational and individual level and there are many instances of the struggle running through the data. Participants wanted to know about lifestyles in the West, and the data reveals that there was evidence of the fact that British trainers were perceived as 'experts' purely because they came from the West. However, participants on the courses also expressed concern about the nature of popular culture and the fact that their children were being exposed to elements of Western culture that were alien to them, such as drugs, sexually explicit media and soap operas. These people recognised the potential for harm, in that they did not feel that as parents they had the tools to be able to cope with the new issues with which their children were dealing. People are voicing their dissent at the new imports from the West and as such are challenging it. Western capitalism is dominant in terms of culture and ideology, but individuals are not being brainwashed completely by it and through articulating these concerns are demonstrating that hegemony cannot be all encompassing. At the organisational level, participants interviewed expressed their concern at the trainers' lack of knowledge of their country, culture and history. They were not prepared to accept without question, new concepts of child care, simply because trainers came from the West. They made it clear within the data that they were unhappy with certain impositions and admitted that they had

the potential to sabotage the aid process, but chose not to do this - not because they felt inferior in terms of child care practices, but because they did not want to harm the children with whom they were working. There are

This allows us to return to the Foucauldian theory of power, in that power can never be absolute and it is not a commodity that is possessed by people. Up until two hundred years ago, power could be said to be possessed by an individual. The notion of kingship meant that monarchy was preordained by God and that all people were subjects of the king or queen committed to their ruler and to the strength, wealth and power of the state (Danaher et al 2000). With Enlightenment came a challenge to the notion of the divine right of kings, the French Revolution and other such global events saw shift in thought. With the Enlightenment came the ideals of justice, liberty, equity and reason, and the means through which people were controlled changed and becoming embedded in the institutions that we are familiar with today: the army, schools, hospitals and prisons. This (as Danaher et al 2000 explain) reorganised the way in which power operated within society. No longer was there a root of power (the King and God) it had been replaced with democracy, in which institutions were developed through which people could be controlled without an individual human representation of power.

Democracy is an important element within the study of central and eastern Europe on a macro level and it would seem appropriate here to unwrap some of the issues concerning power within a democratic state. One might suggest that the Soviet Union was similar in some ways to the old pre-enlightenment stage, where the root of power could be tangibly located at the head of the party hierarchy. This was, however, not the case as argued by Zinoviev (1985:181). He maintains that Communism as it existed in the Soviet Union was a complex jumble of relations between local soviets and cells and the ministries, committees, unions, militia and the organ of state security. Zinoviev (1985) maintains that power is possessed by individuals but those individuals themselves are subject to the power of others. For example, if one is a civil servant within the housing department of a local Soviet one can use influence in order to secure better housing for a friend or family member, by the same token the assisted family member will be

expected to return the favour based upon their position or work place. Ideology does not enter the equation although it was a seemingly all encompassing factor of life under communism. Zinoviev concludes that power within the Soviet Union was at once omnipotent and impotent. It could cause enormous amounts of destruction and evil (Stalin) with impunity and was impotent in that it was incapable of doing good gratuitously. People developed their own ways to subvert the potentially violent power of the state. As Hingley (1972) has argued, people learned to communicate with only trusted friends and family members, and in public they stuck to the party line only offering their real views with those they could trust. The power of the party was not absolute and as has been discussed above, the people themselves were never powerless.

Kojevnikov (1999) seems to echo this analysis of power in that whilst it would seem that on the surface, the people were controlled by bureaucracy at varying levels, the notion of 'Party' was at the core of the control but was a nebulous concept which Kojevnikov terms, 'an imagined agency. ' An earlier chapter examined the phenomenon of the nomenklatura and the extent to which this group were similar to privileged classes in the west, possessing the same money and the influence. It is possible to see in both of these examples, how in reality there does not seem to be much difference from Western notions of power, in that power is owned by no one. In a communist context, people were under the impression that the party was all powerful, but as Kojevnikov argues the 'party' was a vague concept. Also ideology espoused equality, but the nomenklatura were given privileges far beyond what the average Soviet citizen could expect. As Danaher et al (2000:41) maintain in the old communist system and within a capitalist context, "*Power moves around through different groups and individuals, but nobody owns it.*" They go on to recognise that there are certain people or groups who have greater chance to influence how power is played out but that essentially it is owned by no one. In terms of a Western example, they use the President of the United States. He is known as the most powerful man in the world, however, there are hundreds of advisers, policy specialists, speech writers and public relations teams who work behind him, and it could be argued that the President himself holds no actual power. In

the same way, under the totalitarian Communist system, other agencies and individuals had certain leverage with the General Secretary. The KGB for example was an incredibly influential agency.

During the research process the researcher felt that the introduction of democracy would have been difficult for people to come to terms with, being used as they had to a party structure where there was no choice and decisions were made for the people through the party. However, this does not seem to have been the case. Participants seem to be using their old defence mechanisms in order to challenge Western influence. They are aware of the power that they possess to sabotage the process of change just as they became used to skirting around the old party rules and structures in ways that were best suited to themselves as individuals.

It seems relevant at this point to bring the discussion to the organisational level to examine the difficulties of challenging or sabotaging the aid process or resisting the power of the agencies involved.

UNICEF is the international organisation representing the rights of children. As an organisation supported by the United Nations UNICEF could easily be seen to be representing international 'good'. The Centre for Social Action as a Western organisation attached to a university could be perceived to have the power of knowledge. 'Knowledge' and 'good' seem to be at the root of the ability to enforce certain ways of working, for if superior knowledge is recognised and if that knowledge is based upon 'good' ideas, principles and work practices are difficult to challenge (Wuyts et al 1992). As has been stated above, government structures and agencies in central and eastern Europe and the FSU have limited experience of alternative ways of working, as such they need assistance with creating new systems that are appropriate for democratic government. They have limited power to challenge because they understand that the old system did not work. The idea of 'good' is even harder to challenge. UNICEF is governed by the International convention on the Rights of the Child, the basis of which attempts to ensure that children live in adequate physical conditions, are not abused or exploited, are encouraged to develop spiritually and emotionally and are given opportunities to participate in the decision-making process. Few people would deem these ideals anything but entirely worthy.

It is difficult to be critical of aid and to see it as ever being potentially damaging. However, in eastern Europe, the disillusionment is so great that the cynicism of economic institutions and organisations seems to be seeping into the realms of humanitarian and social aid. Within the data there were instances where individuals were critical of the way in which UNICEF worked and the fact that they seemed to feel 'powerless' because, where once, as a government research unit, they had the power to dictate to others, they were now having to operate within a framework of different rules of which they were unsure and to which they were unused.

Within an international context, the collapse of the USSR saw the end of the era of Russia as the superpower, similarly on an organisational level, power is now no longer lies within government departments but has shifted to international organisations – these have the financial resources and therefore the presumed right to dictate the direction of change.

There were also instances highlighted within the data where Ukrainians raised the issue of funding for childcare programmes and this makes the power of UNICEF even greater for they have the economic power, AND the power of 'good', making it yet more difficult to challenge. This has been reflected within the data whereby Ukrainian participants have felt frustrated on two levels. In the first instance they are unused to the new systems with which they have had to engage. Fixed term funding ensures that they have to reach targets quickly and to achieve results in a set time frame; their consciences have told them that to rush through changes would have a potentially detrimental effect upon the children and this has caused them to be anxious. Rather than challenge such a worthy organisation openly, the situation occurred whereby participants have spoken about 'deceiving' the partners and so sabotaging the process. Mikkelsen (1993:65) examines this in terms of development where she argues that:

" It is a contradiction in terms to not let people themselves define whether or not they see themselves as beneficiaries and for someone outside ... to tag the name beneficiary on to people who may feel themselves in opposition to the project, or worse, maybe even as losers."

Ukrainian participants have certainly felt somewhat powerless and rather frustrated in terms of the aid process. This frustration led to the realisation

that whilst UNICEF and the CSA had so much power in terms of 'good' and 'knowledge', when participants felt that there was no other means of making themselves heard, they also recognised that there was the potential for sabotage, a course that they were not prepared to take because of the children involved. The simple knowledge that they would be able to deceive the partners, should they so wish, was a way of feeling more powerful.

The process of humanitarian aid is supposed to achieve positive effects – in the case of this research they have been the deinstitutionalisation of child care the introduction of fostering and adoption – both extremely worthy causes. UNICEF's purpose is the protection of children through the articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. However, the power that UNICEF possesses could be said to be causing other effects that were not intended. Foucault's example of the prison system provides a useful analogy. He argues that the prison system aims to create docile, compliant people when in fact they function as a training ground for criminals. Inmates are labelled and treated as deviant, lazy and useless by the system and are all brought together to exchange ideas and to become more efficient as criminals – not the intended effect (Danaher et al 2000). Within the process of achieving change in children's homes the unintended effect is when people are placed under pressure and labelled not as deviant but as having poor systems of child care, they become disengaged and disillusioned with the process and are more likely to sabotage it and invest strengthened involvement in existing systems.

Within the data there is a sense that people are ashamed about the conditions of the children's homes and feel that they are being forced to 'wash their dirty laundry in public.' The fact that Ukrainian participants were instructing the interpreters not to translate certain conversations may well have been an attempt to hide from British trainers information that they felt might be judged by them based upon Western standards. The research that was undertaken during the first year of the project allowed the Ukrainian researchers to see for the first time the conditions in the children's homes and they at once became both protective and defensive. Within the field notes there are instances where it has been clear that Ukrainian participants

perceived the system of child care in Britain to be far superior to their own and whilst they understood the fact that the state of their children's homes was as a result of an ideology that espoused group care, vast under funding and mismanagement they still experienced feelings of inadequacy, caused by the notion that all things Western were superior.

Gramsci's idea of hegemony could help with an explanation of why participants were convinced that Western methods of child care are superior. He would argue that what is occurring is consensual control where,

"Individuals 'willingly' or 'voluntarily' assimilate the world view or hegemony of the dominant group." (Ransome 1992:150).

In this way it is the power of hegemony that seems to have convinced participants of their inferiority in comparison to Western standards of child care. The fact that residential care in Britain is poorly managed, and has over the last decades allowed children to be systematically abused, is hidden by the wider notion that Western culture is superior to all others.

Imposition is an issue that was raised several times in the data. Ukrainian participants argued that they did not feel that social action and its methods had been imposed upon them, British trainers also felt that the process used was culturally transferable and just as effective in Ukraine as it is in the UK. However if theories of power are used to explore the notion of imposition, some doubts begin to arise. As an organisation the CSA works with 6 principles that were explored within an earlier chapter. As an organisation they were asked to provide training around issues of residential child care and the introduction of fostering and adoption. However, the participants on the courses did not 'sign up' to the social action package and were not asked to agree to the principles that the trainers would be working within. Having lived for so long within a state that used to be so controlling, they are also unused to challenging. It would appear that in this sense, organisational values were being imposed upon the UISR and through it, upon participants. As has been discussed above, the notion of good is difficult to challenge, and the principles of social action are very much tied up with 'good' practice. However, the extent to which certain principles are culturally transferable is questionable. The anti-oppressive principle is a clear example. The data uncovered some problems in terms of cross-cultural

challenge and the difficulties that trainers had of challenging what they felt were oppressive behaviours or language.

Cemlyn (1995:91) argues that,

"Some of our key social values, and principles such as equal opportunities, empowerment, user-control, to whose development we are committed, may be absent or even opposed in the Russian framework."

This seemed to be very much the case in terms of the work that was undertaken in Ukraine. The values to which Cemlyn (1995) refers can all be found within the principles of social action and the situations that arose in terms of anti-oppressive practice were very difficult for both trainers and participants to deal with. The social action principle which governs equal opportunities, is based upon British definitions of oppression and its forms. Once the trainers were in a situation where the principle would normally influence their actions, they were instead faced with a situation that was not covered within the principles – that is to say, they recognised that they were working within a very different cultural context and did not have the appropriate tools to handle the situation. On one occasion this led to feelings of hostility that were directed at the group based upon the frustration that comes with not being adequately prepared. This has been discussed in depth in an earlier section.

Putting aside notions of anti-oppressive practice, the above arguments are concerned with different understandings, based upon different frames of reference and different knowledge. Foucault recognised this in terms of the history of knowledge and how people, over time, have perceived their worlds very differently. Foucault divides history into epistemes, periods of time that were, *"organised around their own specific world views,"* (Danaher et al 2000: 15). Different cultures would have their own epistemes, but the dominant Western epistemes will be seen as having the greater importance in terms of history. Whilst there are exceptions, the general world view of anti-oppressive practice (dominated by Western thought) takes exception to the discrimination of people based on race, culture, religion, gender, ability and sexuality. These views are based upon a specific history of thought and events that have led us to believe that

discrimination is unacceptable. Within eastern Europe, however the focus for people for almost a century has been entirely based upon Marxist ideologies, and whilst these are based upon notions of equality, discrimination was simply directed at different groups, for example dissidents who challenged the system, gay men (homosexuality is still illegal in many countries of the region) and Roma. Discrimination was also felt in different ways. For example, whilst women were seen by Communism to be equal, the reality of the triple burden reveals the fact that whilst women were equal in terms of work, they were still expected to take on all of the domestic tasks within the home.

What occurred within the training sessions involved a clash of understandings, with British trainers being convinced that discrimination was wrong and with Ukrainian participants not knowing that their actions and words were causing offence, because they were coming from a history of ideas, thoughts and events that were so different, even more so because in the main they had been kept isolated from the development of ideas in the rest of the world.

On an international level, discrimination is largely seen as being unacceptable. The Convention on the Rights of the Child, and international human rights legislation attempts to protect populations from discrimination. As essentially Western principles they are perceived as being the global ideal and when countries, organisations or individuals flout these laws they are held to account by global powers such as the United Nations. However, it is clear in many cases that the rules are applied more harshly to 'third world' countries than they are to Europe and the United States. For example, when the United States and Great Britain opted to attack Iraq in the early 1990's after weapons inspectors had been expelled, it was a decision that was openly criticised by the United Nations, although both nations were not held to account or made to answer to their actions in an international court of law. The fact is largely ignored that the USA and many other countries have weapons of mass destruction, but are not subject to visits from United Nations inspectors.

Bringing this down to the organisational level, the Centre for Social Action in many ways reflects current Western beliefs about discrimination, whilst

UNICEF reinforces the partnership with its specialist commitment to children. In the middle of these organisations is the Ukrainian agency the UISR, who have been used to working with children in a certain way for so many years. As a government agency their aims and objectives will have been closely linked to the communist party and therefore with the ideology entrenched within that. Equality of opportunity for members of this organisation will be very different from their counterparts in the other organisations, which are entirely Western constructs. In this way it is possible to see how the international level is reflected within the organisational level. The Director of the UISR was often difficult to deal with and one could suggest that this may be in part due to a sense of frustration that the process of change seemed largely to be in the hands of Western organisations with globally reinforced 'good' and 'knowledge' on their side.

On an individual level, it is possible to observe the conflicts that arise when people from such different political cultures. The frustration of the trainers when faced with challenges to their belief systems could be observed on several occasions, but the reactions to these challenges expose the level at which the trainers were extremely powerful as individuals. Within the interviews conducted with Ukrainian participants, and through observations recorded in the field notes, there was no obvious reaction amongst the participants to the frustrations of the trainers. This suggests that on an individual level, trainers were perceived as those who 'knew best' and so, just as on the international and organisational level, very difficult to counter. If we perceive someone as having more knowledge than ourselves on a particular subject, it is far more difficult to challenge them.

Behind the individual trainers there is Western superiority, knowledge and perceptions that West is best. Participants had lived for a long time within a society where challenge meant severe penalties, and this, coupled with the acknowledgement that they were being 'helped' by people who knew best, must have made any kind of confrontation with the trainers very difficult indeed.

Power is present within every level of the consultancy and development process. The pressures that have been placed upon the region to change as

quickly as possible has been phenomenal. On a global stage the post-communist countries are now seen as being the poor relations within Europe and as such must be 'helped' to become essentially Western, whether that is in terms of popular culture, democratic structure or the reconstruction of state child care. The above discussion has attempted to examine how power is such an integral part of this process at every level, and how each level is interlinked with the others. Power has been examined before within the context of development, but the context of eastern Europe makes it a very different debate. Internationally, post soviet eastern Europe has been stripped of the power it once had. Third world nations have never had the global power that the old Soviet Union possessed and it is possible to see effects of such a global fall from power within organisations and ultimately the people who work within them.

Whilst social action has been appreciated in terms of the assistance it has offered to Ukraine, there are undercurrents of indignation and humiliation of having to receive assistance of any kind. These are not aimed at social action but at the wider situation of being invaded by Western consumerism, economics and values to which people in Ukraine are unused. People can see the influences of the West in their own and their children's lives, they are unhappy when consultants arrive with solutions within a political and social context they do not understand, but they find challenge difficult because they are not accustomed to questioning a system they knew to be flawed, let alone a system that is globally recognised as being right.

Conclusions

This research has explored the process of cross-cultural consultancy and has found that it is not enough to examine events that have occurred in the training room. Knowledge transfer or knowledge generation does not take place in a vacuum, and this research has explored some of the factors that have impacted on the programmes at three levels: the global, the organisational and the individual levels, for it is through an understanding of influences at these different levels, and the balance of power within each of them that provide the key to what occurred in training sessions and the core findings of this research.

Global

Ransome(1992:150) describes hegemony as the situation which occurs when *"Individuals willingly or voluntarily assimilate the world view or hegemony of the dominant group."* The situation in central and eastern Europe allows us to see how this occurs and how global forces and power structures of both a coercive and consensual nature are attempting to draw the post-communist region into dominant economic, cultural and social world orders.

The countries of central and eastern Europe have experienced considerable change over the last thirteen years. From the 1950s until the 1980s they had superpower status and fought to maintain a political system that was in direct contrast to that of the West. The USSR was denounced by Western governments as an 'evil regime', intent on global domination and a threat to freedom and democracy. When the USSR collapsed and the largest experiment in communism ended at the end of the 1980s, it was as if capitalism had triumphed and that the people of eastern Europe had been 'freed' and would be liberated by the West. This liberation took many forms. In the first instance vast loans were awarded in order that crumbling economies could be rebuilt, but on the stipulation that they would be restructured along capitalist lines. From this point on we can see how the people in the region began to experience the hardships that capitalism brings, and that, under the guise of freedom and democracy, came cuts in

social spending, withdrawals of government subsidy and the resulting mass unemployment and subsequent poverty.

These economic impositions could be said to be the coercive controls, for the countries of the region had no choice but to accept the conditions of the loans. Next, came the consensual controls as people were bombarded with Western popular culture. This included the introduction of cheap American soap operas, films and music. Consumerism also arrived and where there had been only the basics in shops, suddenly they were full of Western produce, which unfortunately, with the levels of poverty, few people could afford.

Alongside the new Western influences, countries were having to come to terms with their altered global status. During communist times, Ukrainian people were subsumed into the wider USSR. Russian was the official language of the country and, just like all the other republics they had to comply with Soviet laws set by the Supreme Soviet in Moscow. Though they were oppressed by Soviet rule, they were proud of their Soviet status which made them part of a superpower (Wanner 1998). When Ukraine declared its independence in 1992, it began to reclaim its pre-communist identity, slowly introducing the Ukrainian language into schools and government and celebrating the culture that it had once had as an independent state, before belonging to the USSR. Whilst this reclamation of culture was perceived to be a positive move forward, people recognised that their status on the world stage had been greatly reduced. No longer were they members of a collective that boasted superpower status, they were now having to accept assistance from the West as one of the poorest countries bordering Europe.

Organisational

The imposition of capitalism in the post-communist region and all of the influences that have arrived with it, are reflected on an organisational level. The UISR was the indigenous agency involved with the implementation of the programmes. It's relationship and interaction with the Western organisations presents us with an insight into how people are reacting to the new pressures brought by transition.

As at the global level, issues of power and imposition are integral to the understanding of relationships between all of the participating organisations, and as the only indigenous agency, its actions and management reveal much about how Ukraine is dealing with transition.

As a government agency under communism, the UISR was an important player in the development of ideology relating to young people in Ukraine. Very early on, the communist leadership understood that in order to fulfil its political ambitions, it would have to create generations of young people committed to creating a socialist state. In part, the very existence of large children's homes was due to the conviction that if the state looked after children they could be sure that they were being instilled with the appropriate ideology from a very early age. The UISR was previously the Youth Problems Institute and therefore a critical player in identifying possible problems and providing solutions. With the end of communism, socialist ideology became defunct, and as such, the status of the UISR was reduced. The Director of the UISR was quick to realise that the key to being successful in an emergent capitalist economy, was related to financial control. When Unicef had control of the finances for the programmes, there were issues relating to money. Employees of the UISR had to work within the financial guidelines of Unicef, which they resented. The data revealed that this caused them to feel that they were not trusted, but the situation was tolerated. When the financial control changed and the CSA took on financial responsibilities, the Director of the UISR became angry and the future of the programmes became threatened. This anger could be attributed to the fact that the CSA was a completely Western agency. Unicef, whilst an international NGO employed local people and as such the Director was dealing with people who understood the situation in Ukraine. When the CSA took over financial control, it seems to have been symbolic of the power at a global level. Western economic controls had been placed upon many of the countries in the region, including Ukraine, and as both the data and the literature have shown, this has caused resentment. The UISR had perceived the CSA to be equal partners, and the Director had been critical of other Western agencies imposing their own solutions on Ukraine. When he perceived the CSA as having more control, he reacted so strongly

that relationships became extremely strained and demonstrated again the indignation of being forced to accept strict financial terms and conditions of international intervention.

As has been argued earlier, managers in Ukraine are now having to cope with vast organisational change. Previously they needed to satisfy party officials and to be seen to be promoting the appropriate ideology. With the collapse of communism, they are having to meet the demands of a government that is transforming itself into a capitalist economy. Partnership working with Western agencies is now required, as these partnerships bring hard currency into agencies that have been stripped of government subsidy. However, on the other hand, these Western agencies represent the power has been taken away from Ukrainian government departments and reinforce resentment at having to receive Western assistance.

As well as financial control, the Western partners in the programmes represented other elements of power that can be reflected on a global level. The CSA is unit attached to De Montfort University and represents the power of knowledge. There were further arguments, aside from financial disputes, that involved intellectual property rights over the initial research, and these arguments may have reflected notions of Western superiority. As Streteen (1974:9) argues, Western academics enter a country that is perceived to be less developed and conduct research that is then published in Western journals, "*adding prestige to the foreign professors and their institutions.*" This reinforces global notions of Western superiority with undertones that suggest that only research published through a Western university is valid.

On an organisational level there are confusions about relationships with Western agencies. Ukrainian organisations want to engage with Western agencies because this brings them hard currency, but they are also struggling with these relationships because they can sense the extent to which power has been taken away from them and they are resentful of the fact that once so powerful under the Soviet system, they are now having to assimilate to Western ways of working, and they are all too aware that if they do not fit in with capitalist systems, they are in danger of losing access to hard currency, if they do, they are admitting that they need assistance,

and for government departments once part of a superpower – that means humiliation and recognition of a lowlier status.

When working with organisations in eastern Europe, western agencies should be aware of the above and should attempt to understand the culture in which the eastern partner is working. Just because post-communist organisations do not have experience of capitalist practice, does not mean that they have no expertise whatsoever. They have learned to operate in a collectivist system with heavy ideological influences. The USSR has an in-depth expertise concerning the care of children and young people in Ukraine, and as such an understanding of how best they can use what they have learned to improve the lives of children and young people in state care. The key to successful working with post-communist working lies within mutual respect between partners:

"With both having equal knowledge of the phenomena they seek to explain ... this redefinition concedes equality of status to both participants, with both having equal knowledge of the phenomena they seek to explain." Jankowicz (1996: 143)

Individual

For individual Ukrainian people, life has been extraordinarily difficult over the past decade. Changes in their lives have taken place at an alarming pace. They have been asked to shake off an ideology that they began learning at nursery school and to embrace capitalism and individualism where once communism and collectivism had been the focus of their working lives. They have witnessed historic events that have seen the end of an enormous political experiment, and are still reeling with the impact. This new reality has created both social upheaval and economic hardship. Many of the participants on the courses worked in state children's homes and it was not unusual to meet people who had not been paid for weeks or even months due to the disastrous state of the national economy.

As well as the economic difficulties that people are experiencing, they are also having to deal with a completely new set of social dilemmas. Their country has been swamped by Western influences that they find difficult to address because of their limited experience of all things that we associate

with Western popular culture. In short peoples lives have been thrown into confusion and upheaval.

It is within this climate that the British trainers entered Ukraine to facilitate the training courses. Both Ukrainian and British trainers came into the training rooms with a set of values, beliefs and professional baggage, based on their experiences in two very different societies. British trainers came from a state of security, from good jobs in a democracy that that is economically secure and politically open. Ukrainian people came to the course in a state of flux, living in a society in transition and struggling to come to terms with both a new national and global identity.

It was as a result of these differences that two forms of 'clashes' occurred: power clashes and culture clashes. The culture clashes were observable within the content of the courses. Social action facilitators take people through a learning process, the content of that process is placed in the hands of the participants. However in the different cultural context of Ukraine, trainers made judgements about the content based upon their professional values and beliefs. These arose particularly when the group were discussing the care of children, and when they made comments that went directly against the anti-oppressive principles that form the basis of social work values in the UK. When trainers responded to comments that they deemed to be oppressive, they allowed their personal beliefs to come to the fore and sometimes challenged the comments aggressively. When this occurred, the participants offered no rebuttal, and this could reflect that they perceived the trainers to be experts; perceptions rooted in notions of Western superiority. All the messages that they have been hearing through the transition are that communism has failed and therefore capitalism and Western models of practice are superior. They did not feel that they could challenge Western expertise, so their only way of venting these feelings was to criticise the trainers for a lack of knowledge about their country, their culture and their work situations.

The power clashes may well have come about as a way of reclaiming the only power that participants had. They could not challenge what they perceived to be superior expertise, so they had to establish power through asserting their control through a different means and this generally occurred

through the interpreting process. It was through the control of information that participants were able to assert themselves. Whilst they did not respond to direct aggressive challenge, they may have sensed that they were being judged and so did not let interpreters go into details during discussions where they perceived that the trainers were likely to be judgmental.

However in the light of the above, and whilst participants were controlling information flows and criticising trainers for not knowing about their situation, there was no doubt that they were also hungry for information about the West. They wanted to know about children's homes in the UK, about salaries, and more generally about Western lifestyles. There is obviously some conflict here, on the one hand there was clearly a sense of resentment and frustration at trainers for their lack of knowledge of Ukraine, and yet a curiosity and desire to know about all things Western. In order to unwrap this confusion it is necessary to return to the global situation.

The countries of the post-communist region are in the process of transition. Just as individuals in the training room are struggling against Western trainers, so the region as a whole is struggling to come to terms with all of the Western influences that are new to them. As the countries in the region are having to adjust their systems of government to be able to fit into the wider capitalist world order, so individuals are trying to make sense of the changes in both their work places and their home lives. Loss of status on a global level is felt on an individual level. Resentment occurs as a result of being associated with a global superpower and seeing that status crash within the space of a few months. Having been cut off from the rest of the world for so long, people are also curious about that which they have been deprived. Consumer goods are now available to them and, whereas before they were not allowed access to Western influences, are now barraged with them, and are struggling to make sense of how all of this has impacted on their lives.

Individuals in eastern Europe are living in a time of great flux and confusion, and it is little wonder that their reactions to British trainers have been so conflicting. The British trainers did not allow for this confusion. They were inadequately prepared to undertake training in the region and as such were sent to work in a situation that they did not understand, with

people who were culturally very different with all the added pressures of transition where people are attempting to make sense of all of the changes going on around them.

The social action process has the potential to give people an understanding of this change, through enabling people to unwrap the upheaval they are facing. The 'why' question could be used to allow them to explore the changes on global, organisational and individual levels in order that they can make sense of the confusion and find some solutions to the dilemmas they are meeting, particularly within their work situations, but potentially in other areas of their lives.

Freire's theory of cultural synthesis goes some way to presenting a way forward. He does not deny that there will be conflicting values between facilitator and participant. Rather he argues that cultural synthesis is a an understanding of those differences and rather than making judgments about them: to remain focused on the *process* of educating rather than the content of the education itself. Content is transient, the subject matter over the training courses differed from day to day, the social action process remains exactly the same for each group that use it, and the principles are the tools for the facilitator to enable the process to become more than an educational framework, but a liberating act of freedom. The act of love of which Freire speaks, is a recognition of how people possess different values depending on their life experience and culture, and a commitment not to judge those values but to ask people to explore why they possess them and how they can learn about their situation and act to improve it.

The global, organisational and individual levels are interconnected, but it is at the individual level that an impact may be made. Reversing the trend of global capitalism and overturning the notion that 'West is Best' will never be easily achievable, but what can be achieved is an understanding of the nature of cultural difference, an appreciation of what it is to live in a transitional society and a commitment not to judge based on ones own very different set of standards. The task is not easy, for as this research has revealed, even for trainers committed to social action and opposed to imposition, human values are deeply ingrained and as such will come to the

surface when they are triggered or challenged. The social action trainer must understand the global dimension of the world in which they live, they must recognise how organisations reflect the world in which they operate and, above all, they must use this understanding to guide people through a process that allows them to make sense of it, to challenge it and to be liberated as a result of the knowledge generated.

Recommendations for Practice

There are many issues which have come out of this research that would be helpful to bear in mind when considering changes in practice. As this research has focused upon the work of the CSA in Ukraine, the following recommendations have been written with the CSA in mind, however they are also relevant for other social development consultants and agencies working in the region.

Preparation

As has been argued within the data analysis and discussion, preparation is crucial for training within a cross-cultural context. This should not simply be about preparing for the training itself but should also comprise background knowledge of culture, society and history and the ways in which they may effect the training process. The Ukrainian participants have been clear that they expect international consultants to have an understanding of their lives and also of their recent history. Whilst some of the social action workers maintained that they did not like to be over-prepared or that they wanted to learn from the people themselves about their lives, the fact remains that the people with whom they are working believe that this prior knowledge is crucial.

Also in terms of preparation there is the issue of self-understanding. As has been demonstrated within the previous section, there were occasions when ideas and professional values were imposed upon Ukrainian participants. In order for this not to occur, trainers should be aware of what their values are both as professionals and people and should think carefully about how these are likely to come to the surface and what action to take when they do. Once again, some kind of understanding of the participants in the training is important and how their understanding of practice may be different from

that of the trainers. Once a situation occurs where professional or personal values are likely to be challenged, the trainers should have the tools to be able to unwrap the discussion with participants, based upon the experiences and values of the participants themselves. For example in the situation where the British trainer allowed her views on child protection to surface, rather she should have turned the situation back on to the participants and begun a conversation about the nature of affection towards children. There is a subtle difference between offering examples of practice and imposing ones own ideas onto a training situation. There is obviously a need to protect children from abuse and in this case the trainer in question could have offered some examples of how children need affection but need to be protected and to be enabled to recognise that which is unhealthy and which makes the child feel uncomfortable. A training session which allows trainers to examine their personal and professional backgrounds together, may have been a useful exercise in terms of exploring some of the boundaries that may become blurred when working cross-culturally.

There are similar issues here in terms of cross-cultural challenge. Many of the British trainers struggled when they heard overtly oppressive comments being made, and they should be sufficiently trained in the tools of social action in order to be able to deal with these sensitively. Asking the question 'why' in cases such as these, is a useful way of allowing people to unwrap the way that they feel, although trainers should be aware that attitudes that have been ingrained for many years will be very difficult to change within the course of a week's training sessions. There are no easy answers to the questions that arise from the nature and appropriateness of cross-cultural challenge. In terms of practice there is a need for the trainer to act as sensitively as possible and to not allow themselves to become aggressive when responding to comments that might deeply challenge their individual values. There is also an issue here concerning future research and the nature of cross cultural challenge will be examined again in the section that examines avenues for further research.

Interpretation

In terms of the practical nature of the courses there are some important areas for learning and practice development. In terms of the language barriers, it is clear from the data analysis that adequate interpretation is crucial to the process. Some of the interpreters used did not reach the required standard, and as such created confusion, embarrassment and occasionally anger. Ideally, only professional interpreters should be used in order that the information that is shared is as accurate as possible in terms of language. Where this is not possible, interpreters should be tested prior to a training session, in order that they are adequately skilled in English for the task. Once their skills have been tested, the interpreter should be an integral part of the team, involved in briefings and de-briefings. Unusual words should be clearly explained and the interpreter should be encouraged to share their observations of the training and the extent to which people understand the content.

Organisational Issues

The difficulties between the organisations occurred as a result of a lack of sensitivity and understanding, and once again it is important to highlight the need for these within an international training context. For people new to the work in central and eastern Europe there should be training in terms of the organisations and roles and their specific responsibilities within this structure. Trainers should be given as much information as possible concerning the different parties involved and examples of how mistakes have been made in the past in order that they do not reoccur in the future.

The key to most of the recommendations for practice is understanding and sensitivity. The people involved in the training should be selected carefully for both professional knowledge and the ability to use social action effectively, and most importantly sensitivity. The motives of the trainers were predominantly the excitement of working in a foreign country, underlined by a commitment to assisting communities and people experiencing difficult circumstances. The one trainer who had specific long term experience of working within a development context, was the only person interviewed who showed a real understanding of the complexities of

international work and the potential for real harm and abuse of power. Once again, as a training organisation the Centre for Social Action has a responsibility for training its own trainers and for equipping them to work successfully within central and eastern Europe. The CSA has many years experience in the region, but there does not appear to have been any real platform for sharing experiences and training to enhance both practice and understanding. There are many other organisations working in the region and it appears that in many cases there is very little in the way of information sharing, and joint training in terms of lessons learned and future development – from the research one could suggest that this is one of the most important recommendations for practice for the following reason:

It is expected that many countries in the region will gain accession into the European Union by 2005. Once this has occurred there will be vast amounts of funding available to these countries in order that they are able to construct social policy and programmes in what will then be some of the poorest areas of the enlarged European Community. Currently the European Commission is committed to the idea of twinning whereby Western organisations are twinned with a similar organisation in one of the Candidate Countries. Much funding will be available for these types of projects and as such there will be yet more consultancies and training organisations operating in central and eastern Europe. On a macro level it would be a sensible idea for organisations already experienced in the region to pass on examples of both good practice, and where mistakes have occurred, how they have been addressed. International Conferences incorporating the input of both trainers and participants would go some way to developing an understanding of Western and Eastern practice, how the two complement each other and what can be learned to go forward together.

Recommendations for Further Research

As can be seen within the literature review, there is very little material published concerning the social situation in central and eastern Europe. Specifically in terms of social development there are descriptive articles concerning work that has occurred in the region, but little in the way of analysis of the situation. There are three areas where it would be useful to undertake further research. The first of these is the nature of post-communism and the extent to which a century of repressive policies have affected people and how people have dealt with the rapid changes that have come about in just over a decade, the second is social development consultancy specifically and, finally, consultancy to the region in general.

The Nature of Post-Communism

As has been discussed in the previous section, countries that have lived through many decades of communism have been affected in a variety of different ways. Communism could be said to be one of the biggest social experiments in history and as yet, little has been published that examines the nature of these societies. There are many historical accounts of the growth and development of communism in Russia and central and eastern Europe and there are also no shortages of political analyses of the Cold War, the rise of Gorbachev and the eventual end of communism. However, it seems that there has been relatively little research undertaken in terms of how people have been affected by years of communist rule and how they are adapting to a life without it. There are some important questions to be asked here.

For almost a century people lived within a totalitarian society and were not allowed to vote. High positions within the government were decided upon by a ruling elite and once elected the holder of the office remained there until he died. Civil Society as we are familiar with it in Western contexts did not exist and most of one's life was dictated by the Communist Party. For almost every aspect of life there were rules and regulations, both official and informal and if these rules were disobeyed the consequences could be disastrous. Freedom of speech was not a luxury enjoyed by the people and the newspapers and media in general were strictly controlled by the authorities.

Hingley (1972) wrote about the Russian mind and the coping mechanisms people used in order to deal with very difficult day-to-day circumstances. What he could not write about was how people would cope when the system that they had lived under for so long was taken away and replaced with altogether different structures. Hierarchies changed almost overnight and where once it was illegal to criticise the government in some countries, after the fall of communism it was positively encouraged. Sociological research about some of these issues would provide a sense of what it has been like for people over the last 13 years and would reveal the extent to which people are able to adapt to different systems. Within this research process, one of the most fascinating aspects has been the contrasting behaviour of the participants based upon the society within which they have lived. There are other examples of this within the literature and a study which brings them together would provide an insight into the way one's culture dictates the way one interacts with other people and organisations.

Social Development Consultancy

This research has provided some insight into the nature of social development consultancy in central and eastern Europe, and in so doing has opened up some avenues for further research.

After 1989 much aid poured into the countries of Central and eastern Europe, although as yet there has been relatively few analyses of its effects. There are several potential areas for further research. In the first instance there are questions concerning peoples interest in Eastern Europe and the fact that so many small charities and organisations mobilised aid packages so quickly. It may be because the humanitarian crisis was so close to home and whilst people were used to seeing pictures of African, Asian or South American poverty, they were shocked at what they saw occurring so close to home.

There are also questions to be asked in terms of the extent to which the aid given has alleviated the situation to any great level. There was much humanitarian aid taken to the children's homes of central and eastern Europe, but has been stated above, there are questions as to how this has actually made the situation worse, in that improved children's homes could

very well give parents an added incentive to place their children in the care of the state.

Research that examines the impact of different types of aid to the region would be useful, in the literature review two specific types of assistance were presented: the consultancy approach and the exchange approach. It would be timely to begin examining the impact of the approaches, how people have responded to them and the changes that have occurred as a result of international input.

In terms of consultancy to central and eastern Europe, one of the most obvious questions to ask is concerned with impact. What has changed as a result of international consultancy and has that change been based predominantly on Western perceptions of need. What kind of input have local people had into these programmes and how has this affected their success or otherwise?

Finally, this research has examined one particular method of generating knowledge within a cross-cultural development context. There are many organisations working in the region, obviously with different remits and motivations. Comparative studies of different organisations would be a useful way of attempting to find out which are the best methods based on what has changed as a result of different consultancies and trainings. It has been almost fourteen years since the first aid convoys reached Eastern Europe, and it would also be a pertinent time to undertake an assessment of the extent to which all of it has either helped or hindered the process of transition. However, whether consultancy, training, exchange projects, humanitarian aid or academic research the most important question of all is the extent to which all of the above have improved the quality of life for some of the most vulnerable people in Europe.

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Appendix One

Afterword

This research has used a combination of research methodologies specifically tailored for the situation in Ukraine. The methodology section provides an in depth examination of these and presents arguments as to why the researcher made the decision to use them within a cross-cultural context.

Having completed and written up the research, this short afterword will offer some reflections as to how these methodologies actually worked within a cross-cultural context. This section will pay particular attention to critical social research and participatory action research within the context of the case study approach. Reflections will include an exploration of employing these strategies, approaches and method and the challenges of using them within a cross-cultural context.

Critical Social Research

Critical social research is very much a Western research perspective created and developed with a view to challenging traditional positivist research. It aims to uncover inequalities and oppressions by exposing taken for granted assumptions about the social world, deconstructing them and examining the nature of dominant power structures.

As has been argued within the main body of the research, Western ideas of oppression have been developed over years as various social movements have occurred that have challenged received notions of society. The development of feminism, the gay rights and disability movements are examples of where this has occurred.

Within a Western context, the oppressions which are the focus of critical social research are embedded within Western society. Critical social research focuses specifically upon race, gender, class, disability and sexuality, which are personal, social or biological features which are deemed different or deviant by a society that is predominantly white, male, heterosexual and able-bodied. This thesis has taken the notion of critical social research and used it to explore taken for granted notions of aid and

development. In the same way as people are oppressed on an individual and societal level, the agents of global capitalism dictate the language and definitions of 'developed' and 'under-developed'. These agents include the international monetary fund (IMF), the World Bank and the United Nations. Through the assistance they proffer, and the conditions attached to it, countries and cultures must adopt capitalist political and economic structures if more 'aid' is to be forthcoming. Alongside administrative structures, Western popular culture and consumerism infiltrate indigenous cultures and reinforce the message that West is best, as has been discussed in the main body of this research.

This research has focused on global oppression and has examined how it impacts upon the process of social development assistance in Ukraine. It has attempted to get beneath global power structures and has explained how they are reflected at organisational and individual levels. The interim evaluation reports disseminated to all participating agencies offered participant feedback and constructive criticism and challenge, particularly to the Western agencies involved. In so-doing Ukrainian participants were given a voice and Western agencies were able to develop their practice accordingly, such as ensuring facilitators were properly trained and prepared, given advice concerning working with interpreters, and the use of the social action principles in terms of cross-cultural challenge of discrimination and oppression.

Critical social research is a perspective that is embedded in the experiences of the people, and as such the researcher recognised that people in Ukraine would have a different experience and understanding of the world than herself. The researcher through using this perspective sought to adopt a non-judgmental approach, and where oppressive comments were made she used sensitive questions to challenge and explore their source. It has taken many years for Western countries to develop anti-oppressive practice and it is a process that is on-going. To expect one discussion to overturn such views would be unrealistic. The researcher used a discursive approach with people and asked them to think about the comments that they made, as she would have done if interviewing people in the UK, but in a way that was yet more sensitive and which took account of cultural difference.

Globalisation is often a destructive force that through communication technology, 'free' trade and global marketing of Western popular culture, is slowly homogenising the world and, in the process, threatening both the environment and indigenous cultures. As has been discussed earlier, in central and eastern Europe, it is clear to observe how this is occurring, namely through the introduction of consumerism, westernised goods and media and pressure to restructure economies along capitalist lines. This research has attempted to use critical social research to examine these processes and to challenge them through the language of data collection, the sensitively challenging oppressive views and the interpretation of findings. Critical social research is a process and from the outset of the research to the conclusions and recommendations made it has been interwoven into all sections (see methodology chapter).

Participatory Action Research

Participatory action research (PAR) is a research strategy. It aims to involve communities in the research process and in my approach it was rooted in a Freirean model of dialogue and problem-posing, where the researcher renounces the right to define the nature of the problem, whose problem it is, how to solve it and why.

Practically, it was a significant challenge for this research to be participatory, in that the research field was so far away and the fact that there were inevitable financial limitations. However, the researcher was committed to PAR and wanted to incorporate its values as fully as possible. PAR recognises the potential power of the researcher and as critical social research is a perspective that actively seeks to understand and challenge unequal power balances, PAR was an appropriate, complimentary research strategy.

The researcher was keen to involve people in the research as much as possible, and worked with researchers from the UISR to check out the research on a number of different levels. For example, they were consulted about interview questions, approaches to research and the appropriate protocol in terms of contacting Ukrainian professionals, politicians and managers.

The researcher sought to build relationships with participants over a period of time and the initial visit was used primarily for this purpose. Opportunities were taken to inform people about the research and to reassure them that being clear that it was inclusive and that its aim was to improve the practice of the CSA as opposed to making judgments about Ukrainian ways of working. As has been discussed in the main body of the research, eastern European people are fearful of being judged by Western standards and it was important to reassure them that it was the training process that would be at the centre of the research and not assessment or fault-finding.

Case Study Approach

The case study approach to the research was one that in hindsight was very effective and the in retrospect, the researcher feels that it was the most appropriate method to have used. Using a case study approach, gave the researcher the opportunity to examine in great depth the transfer of knowledge process. Three organisations were involved and the research was able to concentrate on all three, and the researcher was able to explore the differences between them and how wider political and economic climates impacted upon their work. To examine a series of different projects in such considerable depth would have taken significantly longer and would have required considerably more resources to undertake field research.

The methodology highlighted the fact that case study approaches was an effective tool to examine "*relatively less studied regions that do not fit Western-oriented theoretical perspectives.*" Bradshaw and Wallace (1991:155). In retrospect there is good evidence that it worked well. With considerable practical knowledge and understanding of the situation in central and eastern Europe, the researcher was able to interact and interview people sensitively, attempting to understand their cultural and professional perspectives and their understandings of the courses. As has been discussed in depth in the data analysis, many of the issues that arose from the data were concerned with cross-cultural understanding, or lack of it.

This research has attempted to link those personal experiences and to trace their meaning through the organisations involved and then to examine the

overall situation in the light of global politics. She found that the situation of Ukraine, and how it was perceived internationally could be observed at both the organisational and personal levels. Every social action training course that has taken place in central and eastern Europe will be different in terms of make up of trainers and participants, geographical location and course objectives. However, the issues that were raised during the course of the research, specifically macro issues such as cultural identity, Western involvement and the impact of Western capitalism could very well be replicated elsewhere in the region, and were certainly observable within the training rooms between individual consultants and trainers. This has been discussed at length within the data analysis section of the thesis.

The researcher was able to build relationships of trust with people, which was integral to the ethos of the research and the philosophies on which it was based. Often some of the informal conversations were as valuable as the semi-structured interviews. During these, participants spoke about their lives outside of the training courses and how they were responding to the enormous differences in their lives. Participants and trainers were interviewed more than once in order that their views could be examined through the process. The researcher was able to get to know people very well to examine the training programmes in depth and on different levels, exploring how people developed their learning over a period of 2 years. The researcher sincerely believes that only a case study approach could have achieved ensured such depth.

Conclusion

Critical research and PAR are concerned with challenging power roles and structures and case study research examines a very specific social situation in great depth. The research has examined personal experiences and views of the training programmes, it has examined these in the light of organisational cultures and constraints, and has sought to explain how globalisation has impacted on both the organisations and individuals involved in the research. . The research design employed in this thesis enabled the researcher to observe and analyse the situation at a micro level,

using participatory action research methods enabled her to ensure that local people and organisations were involved in building the research methodology, and critical social research placed the development situation in Ukraine within a global context, deconstructing and reconstructing relationships in terms of examining the situation in terms of global inequality and taken for granted assumptions of what aid and development mean.

Appendix Two

Research Questions - Individual and Group Interviews (First Round)

Did you have any expectations of the training courses?

How do you think Western trainers perceive the situation in Ukraine?

How do you think using interpreters affect the training?

What were the best aspects of the course?

What were the least useful aspects of the course?

What did you think about social action?

Course delivery, methods

Is there anything you would change about the courses?

What would you like to see in the next set of courses?

Questions for Cultural Information

What is good about living in Ukraine at the moment?

What is bad about living in Ukraine?

What has changed for you since 1990?

What do you think about the Western influences that have been introduced to Ukraine over the past few years?

What do you think about Western consultants coming to Ukraine?

What do you think Ukraine will be like in 10 years time?

Research Questions Individual and Group Interviews – Second Round

What have you been doing since the last training course?

From the last set of training courses, what has helped you?

What else has been helpful?
Organisations? People

Have there been any obstacles? What were they? Why did they hinder you?

Was there anything that you found particularly useful on the last training course?

Is there anything you would have changed on the course? Why?

What kind of preparation do you think British trainers should have before coming to Ukraine?

Research Questions – Staff in Children’s Homes

What’s it like working here?

What’s the best thin about working here?

What is the worst thing about working here?

What do you think are the biggest difficulties for the children here?

Have you seen any changes at work over the last year?
Staff, environment, buildings, attitudes of children

How have these made things better for a) staff and b) children?

What would you change